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[THE TUG OF WAR.]

LADY JULIETTE'S SECRET.

BY THE AUTHOR OF

"Grand Court," "The Rose of Kendale," &c., &c.

CHAPTER XXIII.

Love that sweetens sugarless tea,
And makes contentment and joy agree
With the coarsest boarding and bedding;
Love that no golden ties can attach.
But nestles under the humblest thatch.
And will fly away from an emperor's match
To dance at a penny wedding. *Thomas Hood.*

THE indignation of Fernandez at being thus addressed by the vicar found expression.

"Your life and works," he said, "are a fine illustration of the doctrines you preach from your pulpit on Sundays. So this is your Christian spirit, Joseph Upperton!—it teaches you, does it, to insult the lowly and trample upon the fallen? You are about to send me away penniless and characterless. Instead of feeling humiliated by the evil which you are about to practise, you stand up there and rejoice in it, you stand up and applaud yourself like the Pharisee in the parable. I am to leave Allonby to-morrow with base suspicions tainting my name. You have hurled at me dreadful insults here in the presence of this assemblage. Probably I stand convicted in their eyes of everything that is base—for I am only the village schoolmaster, while all that you say appears sacred in their eyes, for you are the rich vicar of Allonby. Yet, disgraced, beggared, ruined, as you think me, and as I am, perchance, I still dare to tell you the truth, to say to you that your priestly robe hides a multitude of presumptuous sins.

"You are tyrannical and purse-proud; you are of those who strive to enter into kings' houses, and love the uppermost rooms at feasts. You seek gold and gain, fine equipages and great visitors. You are like the rich man in the parable, there is no pity in your hard heart for any of those who suffer. It is not so with your good curate, Mr. Clenham. His life is one system of self-denial and self-sacrifice; his heart, full of love and pity, bleeds and suffers for others' woes;

he is always in his place as a Christian priest, praying in cold hovels by the side of dying paupers, gathering the little children about his knees that he may teach them the way to Heaven. He denies himself fashionable clothing, and even nourishing food, that he may have more to give to those who are ragged and hungry. He is a true disciple of the Great Master whose message is peace and love. But you—you are a wolf in sheep's clothing; you are a self-righteous Pharisee; you are a hypocrite!"

Fernandez had spoken rapidly; his angry words, barbed and pointed by pungent truths, stung the self-love of the vicar to the quick. He turned pale with rage; he cast a look of deadly spite at the audacious young man who had dared to speak to him thus boldly and in the face of so many assembled witnesses.

"You shall repent this," he exclaimed, "you shall repent this."

Saying which he walked rapidly away. The wheels of his carriage had been hastily repaired by a man who for such emergencies was attached to the staff of the "Three Oaks."

Fernandez did not seat himself again in the little bar-parlour; he noticed that a coldness towards himself had crept over the little assembly.

"It is the way of the world," thought he.

Those who had been willing and anxious to claim him for a boon companion half-an-hour before now shrank away, after hearing him proclaim himself beggared and ruined.

Fernandez spoke no more, but walked out into the night, giving first a parting bow to the landlord and landlady and the assembled guests.

He found his way home to Honey-suckle Cottage, went in and relighted his lamp. Then he began to pack up his worldly goods and chattels. He would fain have taken his departure before the break of day, but he felt it was necessary to remain either to receive the money that was due to him, or else to inform his creditors that such moneys were due, and to give them written orders upon the vicar. Fernandez was in a miserable frame of mind; there seemed no room in his heart for faith, hope, or

charity. His love for Juliette assumed now more the dimensions of a tragic and overwhelming passion, which had begun in mockery and could only end in despair or death. His friendship and admiration for Mr. Clenham resolved themselves into a species of surprise and curiosity. The curate's gentleness, patience, and Christian fortitude were surely mere anomalies in this wicked world, where everything was so sadly out of joint; such goodness was cast thrown away. As for hope and self-reliance, Fernandez was destitute of both on this unhappy morning, when the chill autumn daybreak found him seated before his little table, his elbows resting on it. His packing arrangements were complete; there remained for him now only to give those written orders upon his vicar, to give a boy sixpence to wheel his baggage to the station, and then, having booked and sent it off by luggage train, to put himself into walking trim for his pedestrian journey of one hundred miles to London.

When his debts were all paid, Fernandez would possess but five pounds in the world. He did not wish to spend one of these precious gold pieces on a railway journey. His two boxes, one containing books and another clothes, together with his pictures, of which he had not many, could all be sent to Euston Square for a sum a little under three shillings. The morning grew brighter, the sun came out and gilded the autumnal foliage, the air was bracing, and sweet with the fragrant odours of ripened fruit and late-blowing flowers. Fernandez walked out into the garden. The air had a magical effect upon his jaded spirits; the universal love, which in reality rules the earth, spoke to his heart in a message of peace. His spirit grew subdued; he felt that though man may be vile Heaven is good; he acknowledged his own impetuosity, impatience, and other shortcomings. He seated himself upon a little garden chair, placed beneath the branches of an acacia, whose leaves were fast turning to gold under the glowing fingers of autumn, then he covered his eyes with his hands, and tears, which he would rather have died than any one should have seen him shed, trickled through his

interlaced fingers. A step sounded on the gravel path behind him, for a belt of trees formed there a tiny shrubbery about twenty feet in length, where one might pace up and down, if so disposed, sheltered from the heat on a summer's day. Fernandez started when he heard the footsteps. He hastily dried the tears which he considered so unmanly, and then stood up waiting, wondering, meanwhile, who it was that had entered his landlady's garden at seven o'clock on an autumn morning.

The figure came out into the sunlight. Fernandez turned hot as it approached him; his eyes flashed scorn and bitterness. Still, he never forgot the courtesy due to a lady, and he bowed deeply to Miss Florence Random.

The brilliant belle was so plainly dressed in a black silk skirt, a long gray waterproof, large straw hat, that it would almost seem as though she had crept out stealthily from the great house thus early, and was anxious to escape observation. Her luxuriant golden hair was hastily thrust into a net.

Florence was excessively pale. She approached Fernandez, who continued to regard her with an eye that flashed indignant anger and half-amused surprise. Florence looked at him earnestly before she spoke. She grew still paler, and her voice trembled a little when she said:

"Mr. Fernandez, you are going away?"

"That is so, madam," replied Fernandez.

"You have been dismissed by the vicar, who is an arch-hypocrite, and odious suspicions are cast upon you?"

"You are correct, madam, in every particular," replied Fernandez, in a manner a little more courteous than before.

Florence looked down at the gravel, and Fernandez wondered at the now deadly pallor of her countenance.

"You are ill, madam!" he cried; "pray be seated. Let me bring you some water!"

Florence mastered her agitation by a great effort. "Pray do not put yourself to any inconvenience," she said, coldly, "and pray do not attribute my visit this morning to any motives save those of philanthropy."

Fernandez stared at her in blank amazement.

"To what other motives, madam, could I possibly attribute it?" he asked.

The pale Florence instantly became crimson as a June rose; she looked up at him with anger flashing for a moment in her fine eyes. But she read nothing on the statuesque face of Fernandez save an innocent astonishment. Whatever motive it was that had brought her out so early to seek him, it was not guessed by the schoolmaster.

The colour faded away again, and Florence continued:

"Last night, after the vicar left you, he returned to Maberly; he came in desperately excited, brim-full of spite and anger. He said something most unpleasant had happened, that he should be obliged, tomorrow, to dismiss his schoolmaster, if not imprison him, and he thought it only right to come and set himself well in the opinions of the chief persons in the neighbourhood, or else evil reports might be circulated about him, and he might be called harsh. He said that he had entered the inn of the 'Three Oaks' to get a man to mend his carriage-wheel; he found you in the bar in a fearful state of intoxication. You were singing a blasphemous song in chorus with some of the worst characters in the neighbourhood. He mildly expostulated with you on the impropriety of your conduct, when, starting to your feet, you attacked him with a tirade of the lowest and most insolent abuse. You were almost inarticulate from drunkenness, and were only restrained from laying violent hands upon him by your fear of those present. He went straight, he said, to the police-office, to try and get a summons which would force you to keep the peace. He came to the colonel, who is a magistrate, and asked him to grant a warrant for your apprehension, as you were a dangerous character. The colonel hesitated; some fear, I know not what, seemed to hold him back. He said he should take until to-day to consider Mapleton, that wretched miscreant whom you know, and I know, to be the murderous assailant of poor Sir Guildford Owen, joined in with the parson in wishing to have you sent at once to prison. The colonel, however, was firm in holding out until to-day. The spiteful vicar chuckled over your poverty. He said that all the money that was due to you you owed for food, and rent, and other things; he said he should pay your debts, as he had the right to do, and not give you the money. I do not tell you these things, Mr. Fernandez, for the purpose of annoying you. I am sure you will acquit me of such base motives. Will you believe me when I say that I alone, of all those present, felt for you any sympathy or kindness? I alone believed that you had been misjudged, and that the saintly hypocrite was uttering

misrepresentations, if not falsehoods. Lady Juliette, whom you honour and admire so excessively," here Florence scrutinised the face of Fernandez, "Lady Juliette expressed horror and disgust at your conduct; you passed out of her good graces for ever when once the vicar stated that you were a drunken brawler in a public-house."

Florence closed her handsome lips firmly after once they had given utterance to these cruel words. Her fine eyes were fixed inquiringly upon the face of Fernandez. The red, angry blood had mounted to the very roots of his hair. Florence could not see the expression of his eyes, for they were cast down, but his lips worked convulsively. It was some time before he spoke. Florence watched him, and read his secret. She had probed his suffering heart to the very core, while her own face flushed, and her own heart beat.

"The vicar is a villain," said Fernandez, at length.

"But Juliette is a saint, is she not?" asked Florence, mockingly, "a saint, although she was so ready to condemn you on the bidding of a man like Upperton, simply because he is rich and you are poor—that is noble, is it not? That is carrying out the Christian doctrine she preaches so sweetly. A sad pity, is it not, Mr. Fernandez, that there should be so much preaching and so little practice in this funny world of ours?"

"If Lady Juliette believed," said Fernandez, "that I was a drunken brawler, she—she did right to despise me."

"Exactly so," retorted Florence, bitterly; "it would be too much to expect a woman, a highly bred lady and a saintimonious saint all in one, to feel any kindness or pity for a sinner. It is true the Christian religion tells us that we should. But then, who cares for the Christian religion now—a-days, where actions are concerned? Words are all very well. Yes, Lady Juliette has a right to despise you, for you are poor, and in trouble, and condemned by the rich."

Fernandez stared at Florence in amazement; her bitterness against Juliette, her solicitude on his behalf—what did these mean? Some faint conception of the truth entered his mind, but he drove the thought away as unworthy to be entertained by a man of sense. Highly born and rich English ladies probably had an independent, odd way of patronising their inferiors, and Florence meant to patronise him, and was jealous lest Lady Juliette should wish to do the same, both of them regarding him, meanwhile, in the light of a mere lacquey or subordinate.

"I have come here this early to see you, Mr. Fernandez," continued Florence, "that I might have an opportunity of telling you who are your friends, who your enemies, and who your mere despisers. For your friends, I am afraid the list begins and ends with one—myself."

Fernandez bowed to Miss Random, and this time there was neither mockery nor satire in the obeisance. She wished to be his patroness, that was very evident. He was poor and friendless—could he do otherwise than be thankful to this gracious and beautiful woman who condescended to interest herself in his misfortunes?

"You are very good, Miss Random," he said, "very kind and good, and I am very grateful." They were the first gentle words which the poor, proud schoolmaster had ever spoken to the fashionable, haughty belle. The fine eyes of Florence softened, and a faint flush dyed her pale cheek.

"I desire to be kind, Mr. Fernandez," she said; "but I desire above all things to be useful. I have not come here to ask you to fly away from the fear of being arrested; on the contrary, remain here, and let them shut you up if they like. When you are brought before the magistrates on the petty charge of using threats to the vicar you will be allowed to call witnesses as to character. I will come, Mr. Clenham will come; and more than that, I will state that your accuser is in league with a man who attempted to assassinate Sir Guildford Owen. You can swear positively that the ruffian whose hand you bit in that deadly struggle is none other than Mapleton, the extramur, and I can swear that the same man, in the disguise of a vagabond, robbed Lady Juliette and myself of a five-pound note when we were left in the carriage in a lonely lane, some weeks back; the servants having each taken one of the horses, and ridden off in contrary directions in search of a blacksmith to mend the broken wheel."

"I cannot understand all this!" cried Fernandez. "It takes one back to the middle ages to find a highway robber received on equal terms at one of the first houses in the county, sitting down every day to dine with lords and ladies."

"The young nobleman," said Florence, "who was at Maberly when Lady Juliette returned, left two or three days ago, very much in love, I am sure, with her beautiful ladyship. When you speak of lords I suppose you mean him; when you speak of ladies I conjecture you mean Juliette. But I assure you,

that I, untitled as I am, feel considerably lowered in being constrained to sit down to table with this monstrous ruffian."

"Certainly!" cried Fernandez, eagerly.

"And I particularly wish to have him exposed and punished," said Florence, energetically.

"It is only just that such a wretch should be given up to justice!" exclaimed Fernandez. "But I have no wish myself, Miss Random, to figure in a police court. I shall not run away, but I shall not wait long to give my enemies a chance of ruining me. I am very poor, quite friendless, a foreigner, and I have not much faith in the justice of your English law, as administered by country magistrates."

Florence looked thoughtfully on the ground.

"Perhaps you are right," she said. "Meanwhile, Mr. Fernandez, do not say that you are poor so long as you have a—she hesitated—"friend," said Florence, boldly, "willing and able to help you. If you choose to go to London, go, and accept from me a hundred pounds, which will make you independent for the present while you are establishing yourself as a teacher of languages. I will write to all my friends and recommend you. When the winter season comes on you will do well. It is impossible for you to get on if you cannot give a good address, so you must take expensive apartments. When your money is expended you must let me know, and I will send you more."

It cost the proud Florence a great effort to speak thus. She changed colour from red to white, and from white to red; her voice was low and broken as she uttered the last words.

"Truly the patronages of these English ladies is extraordinary," thought Fernandez to himself. Then he hastened to speak.

"Madam," he said, "your generosity does you honour; but even a wretch, abject as myself, has his own code of honour, his faith in which he would fain live and die. Thanks, madam, a thousand thanks for your generous offer! but it would be as impossible for me to accept it as it would be for me to rob you by violence or craft of your gold. I am escaping now from the hateful thralldom of the self-righteous priest of this parish, and I would not willingly place myself under the silken rein even of a lady noble and charitable as yourself."

Florence winced at the word charitable, and turned very pale.

"I love liberty," continued Fernandez, "though I have every faith in you, that you would use your power generously."

Florence bowed to him haughtily—one had nearly said angrily.

"Though I have every faith in you," repeated Fernandez, "that you would use your power generously, I must be excused for wishing to be free and independent. A thousand thousand thanks for your noble offer, but I must decline it."

The face of Florence flushed hotly, she set her teeth hard, an unpleasant light came into her eyes; she was desperately enraged—nay, the haughty belle was convulsed by a paroxysm of fury.

"Independence!" she cried, with a laugh of bitterness, "when you will have first to pawn your clothes, then your books, to buy your daily bread. Independence in a great cruel city like London, where every man will shut his door in your face if he knows you are poor. You will be under the heel of every one. You will be cold and hungry. You will be the slave of your landlady because you will not be able to pay your rent. Is all this better than owing a little common courtesy and gratitude to a woman who has wished to befriend you? Go then, Mr. Fernandez, go in your hateful pride. You are an unwashed cub, whom the world will speedily lash into humility. Adieu! I am no longer your friend. You have met all my kindnesses with a systematic scorn. But fear not, you shall never again be persecuted by my attempts to curb you by what you term a silken rein; you will find the chain of poverty galls far more sorely."

Then Florence walked away, uttering a peal of laughter which was remarkable for the bitterness and the pain which rang through its silvery sound.

Fernandez stared after her in amazement.

"Extraordinary creature!" he said, "generous and noble in her way, no doubt, but tyrannical and exacting. Ah, I would not be in your power, fair dame—no, not for twice two hundred pounds."

CHAPTER XXIV.

Shuddering Autumn stops to list,
And breathes his fear in sudden sighs.
With clouded face, and hazel eyes
That quench themselves, and hide in mist.

Thomas Hood.

THE days passed on at Maberly Abbey quietly enough after the conversation recorded in the last chapter.

The colonel refused to grant the warrant for the

apprehension of Fernandez, so the young man went to London after his debts were paid—at least he started for the metropolis on foot. Everybody was aware of that fact; he carried with him the pity and the prayers of Mr. Clenham, and also of the parents of the school children.

Sir Guildford began to recover. One morning Dr. Piper, who was the chief medical attendant on the merchant, entered the breakfast parlour at the Abbey, rubbing his hands with a species of pardonable satisfaction.

"He is perfectly conscious," cried the doctor, "perfectly conscious, and knows everybody; really, I think, he will be able to come downstairs in a few days."

Now there were seated at the table Miss Florence Random, Mr. Mapleton, and the colonel; Mrs. Philbertson was breakfasting in her own room. Florence saw a change pass over the face of Mapleton, and she said to herself:

"Our worthy friend will not trouble the Abbey long with his presence now that this recovery begins to take place; he would not like to run the risk of being recognised by the wounded man, as he has been recognised by me, and by—that arrogant, penniless Fernandez."

It turned out that Florence was perfectly right in her conjecture. That very day Mapleton announced his intention of departing for London the following morning, and commenced his preparations for the journey. It was a gusty autumn day, the trees rocking wildly in the wind; Florence, wrapped in a gray cloak (lately she had cast away much of her splendid attire, and seemed to prefer plainer toilettes), was pacing hastily up and down a certain path in the shrubbery; yellow leaves were strewn at her feet; her head was lowered, she was speaking to herself. Suddenly she raised her eyes, for she heard the creaking of a gate which was placed at the summit of a flight of steps leading from the high road into the shrubbery; she perceived Lady Juliette and her maid, Finette; they had been into the village dispensing charity among the poor and sick, and they carried empty baskets in their hands. Lady Juliette, like Florence, was habited in sober gray. A long cloak descended to within a few inches of the edge of her skirt of black silk; on her head was a blue silk hood to protect her from the cold wind. Florence beckoned to her almost fiercely.

"Come here, Juliette," she cried; "send Finette home with the empty baskets; it will not hurt you to walk a little with me; I have a great deal to say to you."

Florence issued her mandate imperiously. Juliette obeyed her with her usual gentleness. Finette was dispatched to the house, and in a few moments more the two ladies were pacing up and down under the wind-tossed trees.

"See!" cried Florence, pointing upwards towards the wildly swaying boughs of the great elms and leafy birch; "see how they struggle and writhe and twist themselves about in their anguish, like mortals in pain; they are types likewise of souls bent down by the hurricanes of human passion, souls which rear themselves and fiercely struggle, and anon stoop and crouch humbly under the overwhelming blasts of their tornado-like fury. Listen now to the shrieking of the wind as it comes in a long, piteous wail from the recesses of yonder closely planted wood. Is it not like the cry of a despairing, storm-wrecked spirit who is at length compelled to abandon all hope, and to own himself conquered, abused, enslaved?"

Florence spoke with a fervour which astonished Juliette. Never had she seen her friend so deeply moved, so impassioned; and now Juliette could not but remark that Florence looked not like the Florence of three months back—the bright colour had faded from the cheeks, there were deep circles round the eyes, the lips were drawn.

"Florence," cried Juliette, "you are ill, or you have some trouble; tell me, I entreat you, perhaps I may be of some help, some use."

Florence smiled bitterly.

"You are always wishing to play your part of sister of charity, Juliette," she said. "You have been into the village now with your bottle of wine, your packets of tea, and your slices of tender cold roast beef—or is it jelly and soup you have been taking to the sick? You have been attending to the bodily wants of the poor, now you wish to alleviate the spiritual sufferings of the rich, supposing that Miss Florence Random, with five hundred a year in the funds, is to be considered rich."

"Canst minister to a mind diseased?"

No, no, pretty, patient Juliette. It is out of your power to help me, or even to sympathise with me, for you are a saint, who should by rights have been carved in marble and placed in a church, St. Eustace, or Notre Dame, or some of those places abroad. It is quite a mistake that you were cast in a mould of warm, white, human flesh. You have nothing in

common with the ordinary emotions of humanity. Every pulse of your heart is regulated like the works of a first-class English watch; not a beat too fast or too slow. I think it would be impossible to make you angry or enraptured, or even unhappy. You mix up a pudding for some sick old pauper; you tie a hood round your head, and out you trip with Finette; you come back again with a rose-leaf blush on your delicate cheeks, looking more beautiful than Aurora herself; you trip up to me, and, finding me disturbed, annoyed, miserable, you suspect that I have slight fever, and I have no doubt you think that you could refresh my system and cool my blood by putting me under a régime of barley-water and lemonade for a few days. No, there cannot be sympathy between two natures so essentially different as yours and mine, Lady Juliette. The only circumstance that had any power to disturb your serenity was when you were afraid that they were going to compel you to marry—ha, ha, ha!"

The wild laughter of Florence formed a sort of unearthly chorus with the wind which was raging and howling among the tree-tops.

"The other day you sent away that young Lord Crossby, who is heir to such a fine fortune and the title of Marquis, perfectly bewildered at your coldly indifferent yet perfectly polite and gentle manner of receiving his attentions. I believe you told him that you never meant to marry, did you not?"

"Yes," returned Juliette, quietly.

Florence broke into another laugh, louder and shriller than before.

"Why don't you enter a religious order at once?" she said. "I would, in your place, Juliette. Are you mad?" She faced about and stared at her almost fiercely as she spoke. "You must be aware that, as you are human, you will have to pay the penalties of humanity. Some day you will die, however young and strong you may be now, and some day you will love—yes, Lady Juliette, you will love. It is one of the penalties of existence. You may look upon yourself as a beautiful patent, warranted never to behave as other women behave, namely, never to fix your whole soul and affections upon some being of the opposite sex, worthy or unworthy as he may be, and to be ready and willing to run your neck into a noose, or to lay your head upon a block for his sake."

Juliette stared in perfect amazement at Florence, who had to within the last few weeks always declared herself perfectly heartless and cold.

"She loves somebody," thought Juliette.

And then intuitively her quick brain guessed who. She knew it was not Lord Crossby. Florence's manner had ever been cold, indifferent, and mockingly careless where that young nobleman was concerned. But there were a dozen little circumstances, small in themselves, which, when put together, placed as it were like a child's toy puzzle, formed a chart on which Lady Juliette saw mapped out the easy stages through which the proud, imperious Florence had passed. First admiration, then exultation in her superior rank, afterwards surprise and bewilderment at her own feelings, then attempted retreat, afterwards jealousy, now fierce, headlong passion. Juliette had no idea how coldly Fernandez had received the advances of Florence. She supposed, in her own mind, that Miss Random was merely divided between her love and her pride, and could not make up her own mind whether she should marry the penniless outcast or devote herself to a single life.

"Florence," she said, at length, "you are quite mistaken if you think that I shall ever marry or love anybody. My life is all arranged."

"Tapices, puddings, basins of soup, and Sunday-school children," scoffed Florence, contemptuously. "Yes, your life is all mapped out for you, until you fall headlong in love with somebody or other; and why not Lord Crossby? He is young, handsome, rich, heir to the title of marquis. For goodness' sake, Juliette, set your cap at him, my good girl, when the colonel takes you to town, and get married as soon as possible. You have only a hundred a year, which is barely enough for your clothes, and leaves nothing for your charities. If you marry Lord Crossby, you can give away a thousand a year in alms, found schools, and what not?"

Juliette read Florence now plainly; her calm, strong intellect grasped the facts, and comprehended the motives. Miss Random was in love with the poor schoolmaster, and she was absolutely jealous of her; she was anxious that Juliette should be married. Juliette asked herself why this jealousy had arisen. Did Florence think that the schoolmaster was in love with her, Lady Juliette? Juliette felt considerably irritated at this supposition.

"Miss Random," she said, coldly, "I wish you to understand, once for all, that I am no longer a child. I think you have coerced me a little too long, and it is time that this tyranny ceased. If Lord Crossby asked me to marry him, I should refuse him, not

only because I do not respect him, but for another reason—a circumstance which renders it utterly impossible that I should ever marry anybody."

Then Florence lost all self-command. Juliette stared at her in amazement; fury possessed her like a demon; her hat had blown off, and she absolutely trampled it under her feet. Her long, light hair escaped from its pins and ribbons, and the wind tossed it about in wild, rough masses on her shoulders; her face was very white, except for a hectic spot on either cheek; her eyes blazed, her teeth were set.

"Impious little hypocrite," she hissed forth; "do you imagine that I do not read you through and through—through and through? For all your calm exterior—for all your assumption of the dress and manners of the sisters of charity, you are desperately, madly enamoured of the miserable young man whom I advised you the other day to entreat your guardian to engage as footman. I know more than you think I know; I spoke to him the last morning before he left, because—I owed him money, and then he told me what you little think!"

The calm, blue eyes of Juliette met the angry glare of Florence with a clear, inquiring, steady look. But Miss Random was in no way abashed.

"He told me," she continued, "that you had tried all sorts of pretty ways to win him into declaring himself your lover. He spoke of you as if you were a mere child, and said, contemptuously, it was a pity such little girls were not more under the control of their nurses, or governesses. Oh, he is an insolent young man! He asked me if it were true that your fortune was only one hundred a year. I told him it was so. Then, said he, that would only buy her clothes—she is not worth the winning. He fancies he is so distractingly handsome that he could marry a princess if he chose. He had the impertinence to tell me that he adored me, but, of course, I scouted the idea, and put him in his place."

The sweet rosy colour faded from Juliette's face while Florence spoke thus, but she never flinched.

"You have not guessed the reason, Miss Random," she said, "why I am vowed to a single life. It is not because I care for that unhappy young man who has told such wicked untruths."

Then Juliette walked off, leaving Florence standing under the trees perfectly transformed by fury. It was some time before Miss Random caught up her trampled hat, and made her way, by a side path, to the house. An insensate hatred of Juliette had, for the time, taken possession of this woman, who, in the earlier pages of this history, appeared light-hearted and kindly, honourable and generous, yet somewhat vain and coquetish.

She resolved she would remain no longer under the same roof with her rival. Hastily summoning her maid, she packed her trunks, and then appeared at the luncheon table in her travelling dress. It was a brown velvet suit, and, notwithstanding her excessive pallor, Mapleton, who was busy with the wing of a partridge, thought, as he glanced up at her, that he had never seen Miss Random look so ravishingly beautiful. Florence seated herself, with her usual superb self-possession, at the table, not glancing once towards Juliette, who looked up at her inquiringly with her large, plying eyes, from which every trace of anger had passed away.

"I am going to London to-day at three o'clock, Colonel Philbertson," she said, gaily. "Rather sudden, is it not? But I have had a letter from my aunt, in Hanover Square. She is not well, and fancies that I might cheer her up."

It was true that Florence had an aunt who had so written to her; she was incapable of falsehood, unless maddened by fury, as we have seen her in the shrubbery. The colonel and Mrs. Philbertson expressed their polite regrets at the departure of their visitor. Mapleton's ugly face grew absolutely green with mortification. He did not presume to address Miss Random, but when she left the room with Mrs. Philbertson and Juliette after luncheon, he turned to the colonel and said:

"Within three months that woman, who has left the room, shall either be dead or my wife—dead or my wife!"

The colonel shuddered and turned white. He knew when that deep, growling voice was employed it had in it a demon-like spirit of evil, and he feared that the diabolical prophecy would be fulfilled.

Then came adieu, polite and complimentary, Florence shaking hands with the colonel, embracing Mrs. Philbertson, and whispering into the ear of Juliette, whom she did not embrace:

"Be on your guard; never trust that adventurer."

To Mapleton she did not even vouchsafe the tips of her fingers. She nodded to him defiantly, then Florence entered the carriage and was driven to the station. That night she arrived in London, and was received at the quiet quarters in Hanover Square where dwelt her old, deaf aunt, the Honourable Mrs. Macguire. Florence was not particularly fond

of this deaf old aunt, and though this lady had a large fortune to leave behind her, Miss Random was far too independent to strive to ingratiate herself in her favour. Now, however, it suited her, for some reason or other, to be in London, and she could not choose but be amiable towards her somewhat suffering relative. As soon as she had made her toilette she sat down to dinner with Mrs. Macguire, and was waited on by a tall, solemn footman. Afterwards they went to the drawing-room. Here the old lady talked about the weather, the last missionary meeting, and other topics equally uninteresting to her niece. At last Florence could bear it no longer; she went to the window, and stepped out upon the balcony.

"Good Heavens!" cried Mrs. Macguire, "it is October; you will catch your death of cold."

Florence, however, closed the window behind her, and leaned with her bare arms on the balcony, looking into the street. A voice called her softly from below.

"Miss Random! Miss Random!"

It was a male voice, tinged with a slight foreign accent, yet not a voice which Florence recognised.

"I come from Mr. Fernandez," said the voice. "Will you come and speak to me?"

Florence opened the window, crossed the room, sprang down the stairs, and rushed into the street.

A cab was waiting at the corner of the square; a tall figure standing by the side of it beckoned her. She was mad enough to approach.

"Do you come from Mr. Fernandez?" she asked, breathlessly.

(To be continued.)

POSTAL CHANGES.

ON and after the 1st of October, circulars, when they are wholly or in great part printed, engraved, or lithographed, may be sent under the regulations of the book post. The book post rate will be reduced to one halfpenny for every two ounces or fraction of that weight. No book packet may exceed 14lb. in weight, nor may it exceed two feet in length, or one foot in width or depth. The regulations will appear in detail in the next number of the *British Postal Guide*.

ON the 1st of October, and thenceforth, postage stamps of the value of three-halfpence will be issued for sale to the public. Post cards also, bearing an impressed halfpenny stamp, will be sold at all post-offices at the rate of one halfpenny each. They will be available for transmission between places in the United Kingdom only. The front (or stamped) side is intended for the address only. There must be no other writing or printing on it, nor must there be any writing or printing across the stamp. On the reverse side any communication, whether of the nature of a letter or otherwise, may be written or printed. Nothing may be attached to the card, nor may it be folded, cut, or otherwise altered. If any of these rules be infringed, the card will be charged with postage on delivery as an insufficiently paid letter.

ON and after this same date the postage will be one halfpenny for every weight of two ounces or fraction of that weight; but the pattern and sample post is restricted to *bona fide* trade patterns or samples of merchandise. Goods sent for sale or in execution of an order (however small the quantity may be), or any articles sent by one private individual to another, which may not actually be patterns or samples, are not admissible:—1. The postage must be prepaid either by adhesive stamps or by means of a stamped wrapper, or by a combination of both; except at the chief office and district offices, and the branch offices at Lombard Street and Charing Cross, in London, and at the chief offices in Edinburgh and Dublin, where, from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m., it may be prepaid in money, provided the postage amount be not less than 1*l.* in any one case, and provided the packets are posted in bundles, each representing a postage of 5*s.* 2. If a packet be not sufficiently prepaid, but bear a stamp of the value of one rate, it will be forwarded charged with double the deficient postage; a packet posted wholly unpaid will be charged with double the pattern postage. 3. Patterns or samples must, when practicable, be sent in covers open at the ends, and so as to be easy of examination. But samples of seeds, drugs, and such like articles, which cannot be sent in covers of this kind, but such articles only, may be posted enclosed in boxes or in bags of linen or other material, fastened in such a manner that they may be readily opened, or in bags entirely closed, provided such closed bags are transparent, so as to enable the officers of the post-office readily to satisfy themselves as to the nature of the contents. If this rule be infringed, the packet will be treated as a letter. 4. There must be no writing or printing upon any packet except the address of the person for whom it is intended, the address of the sender, a trade mark or number, and the price of the articles; nor may there be any writing or printing or other thing enclosed, except such address, mark,

number, and price, and a written or printed description of the articles; and these particulars may be on labels attached to the samples. If this rule be infringed, the packet will be treated as a letter. 5. Any prohibited enclosure will be taken out and forwarded to the address on the packet, charged with full postage as an unpaid letter. 6. No packet must exceed 12oz. in weight, or 2ft. in length by 1ft. in width or depth.

As to newspapers sent by post on and after the 1st of October the following order has been issued.

—1. *Inland Newspapers.*—The following will be the rates of postage on registered newspapers:—Prepaid rate. On each newspaper, whether posted singly or in packet, 1*d.*; but a packet containing two or more registered newspapers is not chargeable with a higher rate of postage than that chargeable on a book packet of the same weight—*vis.*, 1*d.* for every 2oz., or fraction of 2oz. Unpaid rates. A newspaper posted unpaid, and a packet of newspapers posted either unpaid or insufficiently paid, will be charged with the unpaid rate applicable to book packets—*vis.*, 1*d.* for each 2oz., or fraction of 2oz., deducting the amount of any stamp or stamps affixed. Newspapers will be subject to the following regulations: 1. The postage must be prepaid either by an adhesive stamp, or by the use of a stamped wrapper. 2. No newspaper can be sent through the post a second time for the original postage; for each transmission a fresh postage must be prepaid, except that in the case of re-direction the amount chargeable may be collected on delivery. 3. Every newspaper or packet of newspapers must be posted either without a cover or in a cover open at both ends, and so as to admit of removal for examination. If this rule be infringed, the newspaper or packet will be treated as a letter. 4. Every newspaper must be so folded as to admit of the title being readily inspected. 5. No newspaper, whether posted singly or in a packet, may contain any enclosure except the supplement or supplements belonging to it. 6. A newspaper which has any letter, or any communication of the nature of a letter, written in it or upon its cover, will be charged at the unpaid letter rate. 7. No packet of newspapers must exceed 14lb. in weight; nor may it exceed two feet in length, or one foot in width or depth. Colonial and Foreign.—Under the powers given to the Postmaster-General by the Post Office Act, 1870, the regulations relating to the registration of publications for transmission abroad as newspapers have been revised. Publications already on the register for transmission abroad, which may not be accepted for renewed registration under the revised regulations, will, nevertheless, be retained on the register up to the 31st of December next, and will, up to that date, be forwarded, if the rules hitherto in force be conformed to. The colonial and foreign newspaper rates are shown in the *British Postal Guide*. Publications not on the register at the General Post Office cannot be sent abroad at any rates lower than those applicable to book packets.

THE STRASBURG CLOCK.—The celebrated clock of Strasburg Cathedral is reported to be destroyed by the bombardment of the city by the Germans. It is to be hoped that the injury sustained by it is exaggerated and that it can be restored to its pristine glories; the following description of which possesses much interest at this juncture. The great clock at Strasburg is one of the wonders of the world about which travellers are very apt to romance a little, making it out more wonderful than it really is. But for all this it is an extraordinary piece of mechanism, and its performances entitle it to rank high in the records of horology. The clock stands in the cathedral, its origin dating as far back as 1352, in which year it was put up under the patronage of Berthold de Buchek, then Bishop of Strasburg. It was divided into three parts, the lower portion exhibiting a universal calendar. In the middle part was an astrolabe, and in the upper division were the figures of three kings and the Virgin carved in wood. At the striking of each hour the three kings bowed to the Virgin, whilst a carillon carolled a cheerful tune, and a cock crowed and clapped his wings. In the course of time, however, this clock got out of order, and in 1547 its repair was committed to the charge of Dr. Michael Herr, Chreitei Herlin, and Nicholas Prugnor, three mathematicians of repute. They died before their work was finished, but it was taken up by Conrad Dasypodius, a pupil of Herlin, who completed his task in four years. The clock went well until the year of the great revolution, when it struck for the last time. Nearly 50 years passed, during which time the great clock gradually fell into a very dilapidated state. It was then resolved once more to restore it to its former working condition, but this was found to be impossible, as the works were eaten up with rust and verdigris. At length one Schwilgue, an artist and mathematician of Strasburg, offered to repair, modify, and reinstate the clock, which task, it is recorded, he commenced on June 24, 1836.

and finished in four years from that time. The quarter chimas are struck by figures representing the four ages of man, which move in a circle around a skeleton mower. The hour bell is struck by a genius, a figure of an angel at the same moment turning an hour-glass, through the narrow neck of which the sand is kept perpetually running year after year. Every day at noon a procession of the twelve apostles takes place around a figure of the Saviour. Each one in passing inclines towards the central figure, which, when the circuit has been made, extends its hands as in the act of blessing. During the procession a cock flutters its wings, opens its beak, and crows three times. The clock shows the month and the day of the month, the sign of the zodiac, the Dominical letter, the sidereal time, the Copernican planetary system, and the procession of the equinoxes. Its mechanism is so perfectly elaborated that it marks the 29th day of February in every leap year. With this perfection of detail, no wonder that the citizens of Strasburg have been proud of their cathedral clock.

SLEEP, PAINTING, APOPLEXY.

WHEN a man is asleep, his pulse beats and his lungs play, but he is without sense, and you can easily wake him up.

If a person "faints," he too is without sense, but he has no pulse and does not breathe.

Apoplexy is between the two; the heart beats, the lungs play as in sleep, and there is no sense, as in fainting, but you cannot shake the man back to life.

In sleep, the face is natural; in a fainting fit, it has the pallor of death; in apoplexy, it is swollen, turgid, and fairly livid.

If a man is asleep let him alone; nature will wake him up as soon as he has got sleep enough.

When a person faints, all that is needed is to lay him down flat on the floor and he will "come to" in double quick time. He fainted because the heart missed a beat, failed for an instant, failed for only once to send the proper amount of blood to the brain. If you place the patient in a horizontal position, lay him on his back, it does not require much force of the heart to send the blood on a level to the head; but if you set a man up, the blood has to be shot upwards to the head, and this requires much more force; yet, in nine cases out of ten, if a person faints and falls to the floor, the first thing done is to run to him and set him up, or place him on a chair.

In apoplexy, as there is too much blood in the head, every one can see that the best position is to set a man up, and the blood naturally tends downwards, as much so as water will come out of a bottle when turned upside down, if the cork is out.

If, then, a man is merely asleep, let him alone, for the face is natural; if a man has fainted, lay him flat on his back, for his face is deadly pale; if a man is apoplectic, set him in a chair, because the face is turgid, swollen, livid, with its excess of blood. W. H.

THE SIAMESE TWINS.—The fact that one of the Siamese twins has recently suffered from a paralytic seizure gives warning, the *Lancet* says, of the event which will in all probability occur some day, by which the living Eng will be left attached to his dead brother Chang. It has been theoretically held that death would probably occur in the brothers simultaneously; but there is no real foundation for this, and the fact that Eng's health has been unaffected by the paralysed condition of his brother, goes far to show that they enjoy distinct vitalities. Separation might, no doubt, be readily and safely effected should one brother pre-decease the other.

MONUMENT TO DANIEL DEFOE.—After remaining for over a century in a somewhat neglected state, the resting place of Daniel Defoe, in the dissenting burial-ground at Bunhill Fields, has been crowned with an artistic tribute of the admiration of young England for the author of "Robinson Crusoe," and on the afternoon of the 16th ultimo the monument was formally uncovered in the presence of nearly 1,000 people. The monument is an obelisk of Sicilian marble in the "Cleopatra's Needle" form. The base is semi-circular, four feet by eight, and the whole is carved out of two blocks. The total height is seventeen feet, and cost 200*l.* Upon the front of the plinth is inscribed: "Daniel Defoe, Born 1661; died 1731. Author of 'Robinson Crusoe.' This monument is the result of an appeal in the *Christian World* newspaper to the boys and girls of England for funds to place a suitable memorial upon the grave of Daniel Defoe. It represents the united contributions of seventeen hundred persons." The work has been executed by Mr. Samuel Horner, of Bournemouth, from a design by Mr. Creke, architect of the same town. Mr. Charles Reed, M.P. for Hackney, who was mainly instrumental in preserving the burial-ground from desecration, performed the ceremony of uncovering the monument.



[MISS THOUVENAL'S GREETING.]

THE DIAMOND COLLAR.

CHAPTER XIII.

A brave man knows no malice, but at once forgets in peace the injuries of war.

Shakespeare.

THE Honourable Peregrine Tyrrol was changing his hunting-garb for one suitable for ladies' society. Wade, his man, was shaking the snow off his master's garments in the little lobby before Peregrine's dressing-room, and when a crumpled paper fell out of his riding-coat pocket, Wade was not above picking it up, and glancing over it with that ominous scowl which for some months had become no stranger to his visage.

Not that Mr. Wade was of a morose disposition, for a "freer-hearted chap never walked," if the testimony of his fellow servants at Vionna was worth anything; and a scowl, not so very long ago, had been as rare a thing on his face as black frost in August.

However, Wade having scanned the contents of the crumpled paper, smoothed it out, and put it into his own leather purse, and then attended his master in his toilette.

Tyrrol was just putting his hand on the handle of the great dining-hall, when a footman answered a ring at the door-bell, and the tones of a familiar voice stayed Tyrrol's foot on the velvet door-mat.

His hand dropped from the knob; he held it out for the card which the man was coming towards him with.

He read, under Lord Edgar Berney's name: "Can I see you a few minutes? I have something to say."

Tyrrol nodded to himself, and turned into an empty parlour, ordering the servant to show his lordship in there.

With extreme gravity they met, bestowed upon each other a freezing bow, and seated themselves.

"I won't detain you longer than I can help," Tyrrol, began Lord Edgar. "I've only a few words to say to you."

"Say them, then," was the sullen response.

"I had the honour of preventing you from disgracing yourself in the eyes of a lady a few days ago," said Lord Berney; "and though the mode I took was necessarily rough, it was for the time effectual. You said you'd not forget it; and you remember I offered to give you full satisfaction any day. I'm ready now, you know."

Tyrrol looked up with derision in his eye. "I have had satisfaction," he said, coolly. "I don't want any more at present."

"What do you mean by that?" "Gerry has jilted you, and is going to marry Grantham in a month."

Lord Edgar examined him with extreme scorn. "So, that's what you call asserting your valour," he cried. "Upon my soul, Tyrrol, you don't deserve to be treated like a gentleman; you don't act like one."

"Take care," said Tyrrol.

There was something diabolical in his quiet laziness—it was too unnatural to escape remark. The fact was, he felt that he had "done" Lord Berney in the matter of Geraldine's favour, and he could not forbear to show a little of his triumph, though he tried hard not to look too exultant.

Lord Edgar regarded him with increasing anger every minute; he had not thought Tyrrol so despicable.

"I have nothing to say to you about your sister," he remarked, sternly; "but I have something to say about another lady, whom you have just as little cause to harass as you have to harass Miss Tyrrol. You have made yourself thoroughly disagreeable to Miss Thouvenal, by interfering in her affairs as no man of common chivalry would care to do; and I have to request you to cease your persecutions at once, on pain of a thorough outbreak with me."

Tyrrol listened with much eagerness to these words, and his taunting expression fled. He looked ruffled and uneasy.

"Are you Miss Thouvenal's champion?" he demanded.

"I am Miss Thouvenal's champion; an honour that I know how to prize."

"I've nothing to say to you about her," muttered Tyrrol.

"Ah, but that won't satisfy me," said Lord Edgar. "You must promise on your honour not to meddle with her affairs again, or I must find a way to make you."

"Confound you!" blustered Tyrrol, "don't threaten me, man. You'd best let Miss Thouvenal alone, till you know who she is. It won't be to your credit—"

"Hold!" cried his lordship, his good temper vanishing. "Another word of that sort, and I'll horsewhip you. Shame, man. Can you only bully women?"

Tyrrol glared at him. There was fear in the glare, as well as hatred.

"Has Miss Thouvenal made you her protector?" he asked, most bitterly.

"She has done me that honour," responded his visitor.

Peregrine mused awhile, with frequent and furtive glances at Lord Edgar.

He seemed to examine the magnificent proportions of the young nobleman with more anxiety than he had ever done before.

Presently he smoothed his brow, adopted a pleasant smile, and spoke.

"Perhaps you're right, Berney," he said. "I own I'm a churl when crossed. I threatened her a little; not that I know one atom of the difficulties that drove her to her uncle, I supposed she wished to keep up a mystery about her affairs, and I teased her by saying I would find the reason why. Of course, that was all moonshine. What do I care for her history? However, since I've frightened her so badly that she has set the first knight-errant she could find upon me, I'll make the amende honorable with all candour. I won't molest her again, you can tell her, unless I'm provoked. I don't mean any offence by that; keep cool. I mean, unless she cuts me too dead; I don't want to be her enemy. I want to be her friend. Will you tell her that?"

"Are you sincere in that, Tyrrol?" "I am; never was so sincere in my life. And here's my hand on it."

He held it out towards Lord Edgar, who gave it a hearty shake of approval.

"That's spoken like a gentleman," cried he. "You're not half a bad fellow, Tyrrol, though you sometimes cheat one into thinking so. And now I'll go; I've detained you a good bit longer than I expected."

He rose, and, accompanied by Tyrrol, left the parlour.

"You needn't be off like that," grumbled Peregrine. "You might as well stay to commemorate our reconciliation, old fellow."

A couple was strolling along the corridor from the conservatory—old Grantham, beaming from the seventh heaven on poor, flustered-looking Geraldine, who, the moment she caught sight of her glorious Sir Galahad, snatched her hand from the viscount's arm, and clasped it wildly in its trembling fellow.

Tyrrol, with unwonted suavity, beckoned her to hasten towards them, and with brotherly pride patted her downy cheek.

"Speak to this truant knight of yours," quoth he, blandly; "lay your commands on him to stay with us this evening, if it's only to show that all old scores are forgotten between us."

Geraldine, now red, now pale, looked from her brother to Lord Berney, and her very lips quivered with agitation.

"Do—do stay, since he said so," she murmured.

And he longed to take the darling just for a minute in his arms, and steal a kiss from those

quivering baby-lips, with a long "Good-by, you darling!"

But instead, he said, politely:

"Of course I'll stay, and be only too glad," and offered her his arm to go to the dining-hall.

Sir Maurice was already there, wrangling over the *Times'* politics with Sir Humphrey Crosse, who knew more about horseflesh and oil-cake than Government or Cabinet councils; and Sir Maurice did not look pleased to see Lord Edgar Berney, although he was the eldest son of the mighty Earl of Lonsdale. He had determinately put Grantham over the head of this young Apollo, though he could not give his daughter either the happiness or the position which the young nobleman would have done, and he did this for no other reason than the petty one that he hated the Earl of Lonsdale with a hate which did him credit in its consistency if in nothing else.

The earl had doubtless done the baronet a grievous disobligement in the days when they were only Lord Chalmoudley Berney and the Hon. Maurice Tyrrol at Cambridge together.

They both loved sweet Lady Rosaline Chesney, and she preferring the earl's son to the baronet, married Chalmoudley, and gave Maurice a life-long jealousy to brood over.

Miss Thorn, the spirited and talented lady whom he eventually married, was the first victim to his cruel coldness of heart; she died as soon as she could, poor lady.

Dainty Geraldine was in danger of being the next victim, especially when she had the temerity to fall in love with the son of Earl Lonsdale.

She was immediately affianced to one of her many admirers—poor, blundering, good-hearted old Grantham.

For all these reasons, the greeting which Sir Maurice vouchsafed to Lord Edgar when he entered the gorgeous dining-hall was not the most cordial in the world.

It might have degenerated to something worse had not Peregrine, entering after the couple with Grantham, hurried forward and made Lord Berney welcome in a way which caused Sir Maurice to cease hostilities—at least, until he could ask his son what was meant by such civilities.

Peregrine really outdid himself that night.

Not only did he protect Lord Edgar from every slight which Sir Maurice might have wished to cast upon him, but he so cleverly engaged the unsuspecting Grantham's attention that he had no chance to interfere between Lord Edgar and his little Gerry, who, therefore, spent the evening pretty much in each other's society.

Before noon the next day Lord Edgar was standing in Miss Thouvenal's anteroom, requesting an audience.

He was graciously admitted, and received by Miss Thouvenal with every mark of pleasure.

The bishop was not present, but Gretchen was as usual standing behind her lady's chair.

Again the resistless fascination of Miss Thouvenal asserted itself over the young nobleman; he forgot in her presence every emotion he had ever experienced before.

"I am the bearer of good news," he said, after the greetings were over.

Her delicate face lit up with animation.

"Ah!" she cried, "I knew that my knight would conquer. So you wrung submission from that cowardly man?"

"I had not to proceed to any extremity with him," smiled Lord Edgar; "he at once proposed giving up hostilities. He expressed contrition for having annoyed you—confessed that it was an outbreak of churlish passion, and declared that he had no knowledge whatever of your private concerns, nor wished to pry into them."

Ermenegarde's bright blue eyes flashed with reckless scorn.

"I don't believe that, my lord," she exclaimed. "He has not told you the truth."

"He seems kindly disposed towards you, madam, and entrusted me with a message for you."

"Ah, ah! a message! Listen, Gretchen, and remember it."

"He is willing to make the *amende honorable*," quoted Lord Edgar; "will not molest you any more unless you are too severe with him, and would rather be your friend than your enemy."

The lady frowned and flushed; the maid's light eyes flashed angrily.

"There is another friend for you, madam," mocked Gretchen, in rough English. "You see how you shall be presumed upon in this Bishopstowe. Let us go away."

"Peace," said Miss Thouvenal, gently; "there are those in Bishopstowe who are worthy the name, and this gentleman is one of them."

"Madam, I don't know your rank," said young Edgar who understood the maid's taunt readily

enough; "but I will never wittingly presume upon your condescension."

"Enough, my dear friend," she returned, somewhat sadly. "A woman in danger and obscurity, such as I, does not call a kindness presumption."

Yet there was something in her mild dignity which impressed young Lord Berney with a reverence which was utterly new to him.

After this he could not venture even an admiring glance, as it would seem audacity unpardonable.

"Well, Gretchen, what shall I say to this Herr Tyrrol?" asked the bishop's niece, suddenly remembering him.

"You accept his apologies, madam," returned Gretchen, grimly.

With a smile, she repeated the words to Lord Edgar. What a change her lovely lips and gentle tones made in the curt message! From Gretchen it sounded too ungracious and harsh; from Miss Thouvenal it sounded too forgiving and friendly.

Lord Edgar thought he was dismissed, and rose to go.

"No, no," she smiled; "you must amuse me awhile. Ah! I am so weary of solitude. Be gay, and make me laugh."

He complied with this very odd lady's request, and stayed an hour, feeling half-bewitched, as he rode home, with the remembrance of how he had made her laugh, and clap her snow-white hands, and cry:

"My heart, but he is a droll knight, Gretchen! I shall remember that for a month."

When he next lay on his ebony sofa, staring at the groined roof of his hall, while Thunder and Matineer snored on the tiger-skin beside him, he was in a trance of ecstasy.

What was the name of that spell which the lady of the enchanted palace had flung over the dawning knight?

Was it love? No, no! To love her would be presumption indeed.

What was it? Oh! what was it?

CHAPTER XIV.

Seeming devotion doth but gild the knave

That's neither faithful, honest, just, nor brave.

Waller.

It was the evening of the same day; Jonson was lurking impatiently in the woods, in the snow, waiting for the Honourable Peregrine Tyrrol, who had requested him by note to repair thither.

When Jonson had waited long enough to set his teeth chattering, Tyrrol came crashing through the woods, in a hurry and in a bad humour.

"Now, my man, make haste!" said he, "and tell me what you have to say, and let me off. I've had to walk from Bishopstowe, since Wade found out when there that my horse was lame. You haven't been for the cash, which means, I suppose, that you've done nothing since our last meeting to earn it?"

"I thought, your honour, that I had earned it with the story of the black box. If I ain't earned it yet, I never will."

"Well, well, Jonson, I only meant to touch you up a bit. Your money's safe enough, only you needn't come after it this week now, since I happen to be cleaned out. Meantime, have you been busy?"

"I have, your honour; but if you'll excuse me, I'll make bold to ask if it's perfectly understood betwixt you and me that everything fresh I hear for you ain't in the two-hundred-guinea bill, but goes in another to be commenced with this here I'm a-going to tell you?"

"Of course, of course. Why, my fine lad, you are quite a man of business. You'll soon be retiring from service at this rate."

"Gentlemen changes their minds sometimes, your honour. I can't afford to have you change yours. Will your honour give me a line, promise me in black and white them there two hundred guineas?"

"Jonson, you're a veritable Shylock. However, you shall have a promissory note, since you mistrust me so. I'll write it in my pocket-book, and tear the leaf out for you."

Tyrrol carelessly wrote these words:

"200 Guineas."

"I hereby promise to pay Simon Jonson the sum of two hundred guineas, for story of black box."

"Signed, P. TYRROL."

And thrust the paper into Jonson's hand.

"Now, you dog, go on with your work!" he exclaimed, impatiently.

Jonson, after scanning the paper with an owl's solemnity, stuck it into his breast pocket, hooked his thumbs into his arin-holes, and thus, in the *déagé* attitude of a most gentlemanly footman, began his report.

"Yesterday, after you left, I runs back to the house just in time to open the door for his reverence and Lord Edgar Berney. They went straight upstairs to

miss's room, and were with her maybe fifteen minutes.

"All at once I see the bishop tramp downstairs. He were wiping the sweat off his brow, and his teeth was a-clinched in his lip, like a man you'd see in a fit."

"He walks straight into his study, and throws the door to—it didn't quite shut, your honour, for the reason that it come on my palms instead of on the lock."

"He didn't look whether it were shut or not, and through the crack I'd arranged I see him go up to the fireplace and stare at the coals werry hard, as if he owed 'em a grudge."

"He didn't say nothing as I could hear, though his eyes went up to the ceiling once or twice, your honour, in a way that made my blood run cold."

"If that 'ere bishop hain't got somethink on his mind, I'm blessed."

"By-and-bye he puts his hand into his breast, which made me think, in a fright, 'He's a-goin' to pull out a pistol and put a end to hisself,' but he weren't."

"He pulls out a hair-guard, and holds up a ring, which were a-hanging on it, your honour. He turned it over and over, so that the fire made it shine, and again he wiped the sweat off his brow."

"All at once he dropped it, and went over to the lounge by the window. He just throws himself on it as if he were a clod, and groans out:

"Heaven help her—she's lost!"

"I was a-feelin' very awkward with fright, and a-tryin' to see where he were a-goin' to put the ring, when somebody clutched me by the arm, and pulled me round. I were startled, you may believe, when I see it were Gretchen, glowering at me like a angry cat."

"Spy!" she whispered—no, hissed—that's more like it—and her teeth gritted.

"You leave me alone, miss," says I, as stout as you please; 'his dear, good lordship's ill, and I'm a-waitin' here to be called in, in case he needs help.'

"The spiteful hussy didn't believe a word of it, but she gave me a push that banged me against the knobs of the hat-stand, and then she marched into the library."

"The minx took good care to slam the door in my face, and I couldn't hear what she were a-sayin' the bishop."

"When they come out I moved up to him, determined to complain of her, but he took no notice of what I said, looking for all the world at me as if I were a stone wall, and then he told Gretchen he'd be after her presently, and went back like a shot into the room."

"I naturally wondered what he went back to do, and after Miss Spitcoat was well out of the way I tried all the dodges to see through the keyhole, to listen, and so on, but it was no go; then I ran into the kitchen and asked Jose, the gardener's boy, to run round to his reverence's window and look in, because I'd heard him fall down in a fit, and the libry door was locked."

"Jose came back, and says he:

"Your ears tells you lies, Mr. Jonson," says he, 'for his reverence was a-standin' up as well as ever he wor, looking at the waleables.'

"Says I, yawning easy like:

"Whatever were he doing, then, that made such a groaning? Tell me exactly what he were about, Jose."

"He weren't doing nothing, I tell you," says Jose, says he, 'but chucking a string off his neck into a black box, and shutting 'em up in that there desk. He nearly cotched me looking at him, and Mr. Jonson, I believe yer did it to get me into a scrape.'

"Says I, just as if I had heard nothing at all:

"Here a sixpence, Jose, for the trick I played you; it were a bet between Gretchen and me whether you were tall enough to see into that there window; but don't you blather about it, 'cause everybody mightn't take the joke as you, and me, and Gretchen does."

"And, your honour, I didn't know wot to make out of that 'ere, unless it was that his reverence had slid the ring off his neck into the black box, which I'm to get the two hundred guineas for telling you about."

"By going into the kitchen I missed seeing his reverence go upstairs, but I was in my place in time to see Lord Edgar Berney coming down all alone."

"He were quite red in the face, and uplifted like, and held his head high, and as I helped him on with his coat, your honour, what do you think I saw?"

"Why, the werry ring that the bishop had taken off his neck was glittering like a living thing upon his little finger."

"I was never so struck in my life."

"It were a queer, whitish-like stone, oval-shapen, and a circle of blood-red stones, like pin-heads, set round it. The big stone were sometimes red, some-

times gray. I couldn't keep my eyes off it, which Lord Edgar noticed, and looked admiringly at it himself. He flung me a sovereign when he was going out, too, as if he were in such good spirits that he couldn't help being free with his money.

"He were back to-day, and saw Miss Thouvenal, and the bishop weren't at home. I see the ring on his finger yet."

Tyrol listened with his usual attention to this recital; but not with his usual triumph.

Dark grew his expression and envious his eye; a smothered oath burst from him.

"No doubt Berney is received as a friend," muttered he. "Whoever gave him the ring, it's clear Miss Thouvenal comes down handsomely to him. There is something queer about that ring; how could the bishop have locked it up in the black box and then have gone upstairs and given it to Berney? Perhaps it wasn't the same ring."

"I've got eyes, your honour," observed Jonson, with unmoved confidence; "I could take my oath on that there ring."

"Very odd," mused Tyrol; "why should he wear a ring at his neck at all, and then give it to Berney? Perhaps it was only the hair-guard which was put in the box, and the ring taken off it. It seems very hard to make out this case. When I think it is all under my hand, and I can hold it in a tight grasp, it spreads out and eludes me in twenty different directions; always something new starting up, which declines to throw a light upon anything that's gone before. What has that opal ring to do with the secret of Ermengarde Thouvenal? What made the bishop give it to Berney?"

Tyrol suddenly tried to work out the problem; but with no success. Therefore, seeing that without further disclosures this intelligence was useless to him, he put it in the storehouse of his memory, and turned to account what material he had.

"So far, so good," quoth the Honourable Peregrine, taking out his purse; "I'll pay you a few guineas now on account, just to encourage you to vigilance. Here's the new bill you talk of:

"Item: Story of Opal Ring: ten guineas. Paid."

"P. TYROL."

He tore the leaf out of his pocket-book, and gave it to the footman.

"Now, my good fellow," said he, "just answer me a question or two. How long did Berney stay with the bishop's niece to-day?"

"An hour and ten minutes, your honour."

"Did he look pleased when he went away? Complacent—uplifted, or anything of that sort?"

"Not so much all them, sir, as absent-minded. As if he had more to think of than he could well manage."

"He's a pretty fellow to mix himself up among her interests," growled Tyrol. "Humph! I must set Gerry on him, confound him! Now, Jonson, is there any likelihood of my being admitted to Miss Thouvenal's rooms this evening? I wish to call on her—all fair and friendly, you know."

"Can't say, sir; Gretchen seems to manage all that. Miss Fane, too, she's always a-sitting with miss when she has no one else; a sort of companion, your honour. She's teaching her a sight of queer things, Mrs. B. says."

"Angelle Ermengarde!" sneered Tyrol; "I hope she won't teach Mabel Kleptomani! However, I'll try my luck at this visit. You be off, Jonson, or that lynx-eyed girl Gretchen will find out where you go. Can't you make love to her, Jonson, and turn her into use?"

"To her!" ejaculated the footman, with a grimace. "She'd scratch my eyes out, which wouldn't be of much service to your honour then, would they?"

"Take care of her at all events. Now be off."

It was quite dark without.

The white velvet curtains of Miss Thouvenal's room were drawn; the grate glowed like a casket of rubies; and the polished stalcotes of the crystal chandelier glittered with rainbow sparks in the moon-like rays of the tinted and perfumed wax candles which burned thereon.

Ermengarde sat by an exquisitely inlaid table, turning over the leaves of a book, but her eyes saw naught within its covers.

A look of inexpressible sadness was on her countenance; it seemed as if she could never smile with joy or playfulness again.

But that lovely face was nearly always so when no one was present to watch it; and Gretchen being for the time with Mabel Fane in the next room, Ermengarde had no tender chiding to fear.

The door opened briskly, and Bishop Thouvenal stepped in.

"Madam," he said, with extreme humility, "pardon my intrusion without being summoned. The Hon-

ourable Peregrine Tyrol has come here requesting me to intercede with you for him. He presumes to seek admission that he may throw himself at your feet. Madam, there can be but one answer for his insolence?"

She regarded him attentively; the bishop was frowning sternly.

"Are we not in Mr. Tyrol's power?" said she.

He silently bowed.

"Is not conciliation, then, most politic?" continued she.

"Madam, he's beneath your gracious consideration. I pray you, permit me to send him away."

"Not so. Admit him, good uncle, and see how I will tame him."

He made a gesture of entreaty.

"For your own sake, dear Madam—"

"Peace!" she exclaimed, royally; "why do you say 'Madam' to your niece?"

"For your own sake, Ermengarde, allow that man no foothold here."

"I will think of your advice when I have assured him of my forgiveness, and heard him promise that the offence shall never be repeated."

"But he will—"

"Silence, my lord!" said Ermengarde, with sudden hauteur. "It shall never be said that the penitent was spurned by a daughter of—"

She checked herself with a startled look, and became violently pale.

"My friend," she said, in a low voice, "this is one of the occasions on which you are to be deaf and dumb. Forget my words, sir."

The bishop bowed; a deep light glowed in his eyes. For a moment a wonderful smile, and a quiver of something more than joy, changed his gloomy face into one of celestial grandeur.

"Madam, you are right," he cried, in an earnest, impressive voice. "It shall never be said that Ermengarde was merciless—it cannot be, it cannot be."

With a look of benignant gratitude, he left the apartment.

In a few moments the bishop returned, followed by Peregrine Tyrol.

Gretchen was now in attendance upon her mistress, and grim enough she looked as the Honourable Peregrine Tyrol appeared.

At first he was almost stunned by the magnificence which surrounded him.

And that fair woman, who advanced across the white carpet, with a face so proudly calm, who could assert himself before her?

Clad in imperial violet, her flaxen hair hanging in magnificent braids down her back, while her head was crowned by pale gold plaits of hair, over which curled a violet plume with an egret of pearls, her neck and pellucid arms gleaming out from waves of milk-white lace of marvellous web, Tyrol felt that the charms of the bishop's niece might grace a Court, and that her manners could not have been acquired anywhere else.

"Mr. Tyrol, I have received your message," said Miss Thouvenal, giving him a splendid courtesy, and waving him to be seated, as she sank into her chair beside the inlaid table.

"Miss Thouvenal," muttered Peregrine, terribly abashed, and forgetting the well-conned speech he had prepared for the occasion, "I hope you will forget my discourtesy. On my knees I beg your pardon."

And he did go on his knees; and abject enough he looked, too, quailing before her quiet gaze.

"I have already accepted your apology, sir," she said, "so cease your protestations, and forget the incident referred to, as I have done."

Lord Berney was good enough to send me a note with your message," said Tyrol, still kneeling, as if he did not know what else he could do; "but I was so ashamed of my violence in your presence that I could not feel at ease until I had seen you, and heard from your own lips your kind forgiveness and the permission to try my best to win your esteem."

"Sir," returned Miss Thouvenal, gravely, "your withdrawal from your former offensive attitude towards me has won my complete forgiveness. Your promise to abandon, once and for ever, your pursuit of the young girl whom I have taken under my protection will win you my esteem."

Tyrol had calculated on some such promise being required of him. He had decided upon his answer before he came to the palace; but for all that he hesitated, and appeared to undergo a severe conflict. At last he conquered his feelings, and a burst of generosity was the consequence.

"Miss Thouvenal," he cried, rising with some grace, and retreating a step, "I am a monster! I am not worthy to come into your presence. For the first time I see the true wickedness of my conduct. Henceforth I will make it my ambition to obliterate the feelings of scorn and resentment which you must entertain against me. It is (why should I conceal

it, dear lady?) it is a hard thing to give up the dear girl, for my feelings were deep and sincere towards her, but I will trample them under foot from this hour. I solemnly promise never to molest her again, nor willingly to see her face."

"Now, this is brave!" cried Miss Thouvenal, turning as usual to her maid, with sparkling eyes. "He is more generous than he allowed me to think. Sir, Ermengarde does not forget generosity."

Tyrol bowed profoundly.

"Then let me think that I have your regard as a man who is anxious to do his duty for your sake!" he murmured, almost with pathos.

"You have my regard, for your sacrifice," she answered.

Tyrol flushed with joy. He could not help it. Had she not promised him her regard?

He began to be anxious to deserve it.

"His lordship has kindly overlooked my rudeness to him," said Peregrine, with a meek glance at the bishop, who stood at the door; "and now that you have condoned my offence I would indeed be a wretch should I cause either of you distress again. Madam, as long as you treat me with this kindly confidence, I cannot choose but be your enthusiastic friend."

Tyrol saw the light, glassy eyes of the maid fixed on him with anything but admiration. Miss Thouvenal herself, however, responded to his gallantry with serene graciousness.

When a few more amiable sentiments were exchanged, Tyrol, not being invited to remain as Lord Edgar had been, was forced to take his leave.

Still, like him, he rode home in a sort of trance, intoxicated with her beauty—bewildered with that nameless grace which hovered round her.

CHAPTER XV

Trifles light as feathers of the wind,
Are to the jealous confirmation strong
As proofs of Holy Writ.
Shakespeare.

It was a pleasant winter's evening, and the sun was going down.

The ground, partly covered with snow, still showed long brown strips of turf or red earth, but the frost was keen, and the icicles sparkled on every bough of the ancient woods of Bishopstowe.

The wide stream which we last saw gliding round the hill on which stood the Tyrol mansion was now a glassy belt of ice; and a little party of ladies and gentlemen were disporting themselves on it.

This party had started from the ornamented bridge at Vionnua, and skated some miles down the smooth floor, long past the Tyrol boundaries, and now they were enjoying themselves with extreme hilarity in a large sheltered arena, where the river had broadened into a lake, and some huge trees encircled it cosily.

The few personages we know are soon pointed out, the rest were of the neighbouring gentry.

First of all, we see Geraldine flitting about on her flashing little skates, like a sprite; her little face rosy with health and glee; her little dimples glancing so quickly, like the sparkles of a sunny stream; her little person irresistibly attired in a tartan short skirt, with an over-dress of rich Tyrolean green velvet, festooned with velvet dahlias, and her green toquet coquettishly set off with a foamy white plume.

From the very top of Miss Gerry's head to the tip of her perfect little boots was a maze of delightful witchery.

Next—in nature, if not in grace—comes the knight of the golden hair.

Really, Tyrol has not proved such a bad fellow, lately. He is always bringing Berney back to Vionnua with him, and screening little meetings between him and Gerry.

It is no use for Grantham to look puzzled and wretched. Tyrol always has a word for him—a word in season, which prevents mischief.

Grantham is still the bridegroom elect; Gerry is still deep in the mysteries of trousseau-making; but Lord Edgar is her love, her life, her adorable enchanter.

She never looks ahead when she can get her knight of the golden hair every other day to attend her in her rides, skating expeditions, and waltzes.

That dreadful interdict fulminated at the library interview had fallen to the ground somehow, and, when she wonders how it is, she can't but see that she has to thank Perry for all her present happiness.

Poor Grantham looks older than ever to-day, trudging along the edge of the river (Grantham can't skate), with Tyrol at his elbow, politely trudging, too (though he is an accomplished skater), and, Me-phistopheles-like, keeping guard over his victim; while, now hand in hand, now darting apart like swallows in air, Gerry and Lord Edgar glide over the ice in a perfect abandon of delight.

Lord Berney had the honour of an interview every morning now with Miss Thouvenal, and although,

man-like, it never occurred to him that it might be merciful to Gerry to mention this to her, his mind was full of her, even while looking into the loving eyes of pretty Geraldine Tyrrol.

The Honourable Peregrine was also on calling terms with Miss Thouvonal, his hour being after dusk, when he could improve the acquaintance of both the bishop and his niece at one time; and although his mind was also full of the wonderful Ermenegardo, he was never the brother to confide much to his sister.

So that Gerry is all amazement at something which occurs this pleasant winter's day.

Carriage wheels are crunching over the icy road, close by one bank of the river, and she and Lord Berney stop their mad race to look at the pretty, high-stepping ponies and the gray, velvet-lined chariot.

A lady is the sole occupant of the carriage; she is lying back among the cushions, and is clad in a rich though dark carriage dress.

She glances around, disclosing a face so purely pale and beautiful that Gerry gives a little gasp of rapture, and her intense blue eyes rest full on Lord Edgar.

A wonderful smile breaks upon the exquisite face; a word to the driver, and the elegant little vehicle draws up, while the lady makes a slight, imperious gesture to Lord Edgar.

Gerry, in amazement, looks in his face, and her own grows chill and sad.

There is rapture in his eye; there is more—love, adoration. Oh, knight of the golden hair, you never looked at Gerry so! Oh! cruel knight of the golden hair, don't you know that Gerry loves you, even as you love that proud, smiling woman?

Already is Tyrrol striding up the bank towards the carriage, with a glare in his dark, keen eyes. The lady waits for Lord Berney—she will have Lord Berney.

In a moment his skates are off, and, leading Gerry very gently to the side of the staring Grantham, he has sprung up the bank and overtaken Tyrrol.

Side by side the men walk over to the carriage, the lady gives a hand to each, a smile to each; the sweetest is to Lord Edgar.

There is a wave of gold-bright hair upon her brow, and a white velvet coronet above it, from which falls a black veil, starred with gold, and Gerry at once thinks of a conquering woman, crowned with the sun, and surrounded by stars; and her heart grows heavy as lead.

This woman, who bends her face to Lord Edgar, and smiles into his eyes, will conquer his heart, steal his love from Gerry, and darken the world for her. Yes; she dismisses Tyrrol with a bow, and she makes room for Lord Berney on the seat beside her.

He enters joyfully—you can see that—forgetting even to look back at Gerry, and they ride away together, the lovely lady and the knight of the golden hair—Antony and Cleopatra.

"Who is that woman?" the heavy tones of Grantham are saying.

Tyrrol looks like a murderer. Gerry, in stupor, says that to herself.

"Ah, that's the mystery of the enchanted palace, Miss Thouvonal," snarls Perry, with quivering lips. "Berney's newest flame."

A little cry goes up from Gerry's heart. No one hears it.

Grantham is looking mightily relieved. Perry is biting his nails.

His newest flame! Oh, false Sir Galahad!

It was too much. Gerry whirled round, felt her skates under her, and flashed off with winged speed along the river's course.

The rest of the party were pottering about the ice in the opposite direction. She did not see them. She did not remember them. She fled like a mad creature, conscious only of despair.

"Gerry—not that way—come back!" roared the brutal voice of Tyrrol.

"Ger-al-dine!" hallooed the frightened Grantham.

She put her hands to her ears, and sped on, faster than before.

A few flakes of snow were falling. They obscured the tiny figure of the girl. In a minute she was blotted out, as steam absorbs the figures on a slate.

Grantham and Tyrrol stared at each other. Grantham was pale; Tyrrol sneering.

"She loves Berney, and you know it, Tyrrol," said Grantham.

"The devil!" muttered Tyrrol. "If she does, let her take what she gets."

"By Jove, Tyrrol, if you've deceived me in this thing—"

"Well, what then?" sneered Tyrrol, as before.

"If you've made me the tool to torture her heart—"

"Well, sir, and what then?"

Grantham muttered an oath, turned off, and began

to walk along the ice in the direction in which Geraldine had gone.

"Where are you off to?" cried Tyrrol, more civilly.

"To find her," said Grantham, without looking back.

His face was pale, compassionate, remorseful. Grizzled though it was—plain and commonplace—at that moment it was lit up with the warmth of generous emotion.

"Pahaw! let her come back when she's tired," said the affectionate brother.

"Shame, Tyrrol!" cried the viscount, more sadly than angrily. "You've played a cruel game, hoping to win Miss Thouvonal."

Then he, too, was enveloped in the falling snow and the gathering dusk. She had taken the opposite direction to that which she should have taken had she intended to go home.

The river now ran back among the Bishopstowe Woods, away from the farm-steads and cottages. She might rush in her froxy miles from Vionuna, and sink down exhausted at last—she might go ashore and wander in the woods, anxious only to evade pursuit.

Faster and faster strode poor old Grantham after his fairy bride. His kind black eyes shone, his lips were compressed with pain, under his pepper-and-salt moustache. On through the gathering shades of night, and the falling flakes, while the great trees closed more gloomily over the river, and the banks drew closer together at every curve.

In half-an-hour the ice was covered with a pure white sheet; the skating was spoiled. Surely poor little Gerry had stopped now, and was thinking of creeping home again.

No sight, no sound!

He called, at first very gently and sadly: "Gerry! Gerry! where are you? Gerry!" and the forest, so cold and gray, echoed, "Gerry! Gerry!" in hopeless tones.

Then he shouted with all his might, and the echoes crowded back from the hoary woods more hopelessly than before. Then he ran as fast as the wind, for the snow had made good footing; but he could not see his little Gerry for all that. Then, breathless and spent, he stopped to look and listen.

Silently fell the snow, silently gathered the night.

He examined the narrow way eagerly. No, there was no footprint there; the feathery snow had covered all traces the moment after they had fallen.

Grantham stood in an attitude of despair. He looked up at the clouds in the sky, where a faint moon was breaking their away.

He had never prayed for himself; he prayed for little Gerry. He said:

"Heaven preserve her life; and I'll see her righted!"

The snow stopped falling; a silver light broke over the level path and bathed the woods in radiance.

Grantham plodded on firmly. He knew that long ago she must have ceased skating. He pored over the dizzy pall, looking for her footprints.

Something sharply glittering caught his eye, under the left bank; something that the snow had not swallowed up.

He ran to the spot, with a throb of the patient heart, and cried:

"Oh! Gerry, darling, are you there?"

She was not there, but her tiny rosewood skates were lying under the bank just as she had tossed them off, and he caught them up and kissed them.

Holding them in a gentle clasp, the hapless viscount strode on, watching the river; watching the path beside the river, for the prints of his little darling; mounting into the path at last as he saw black water ahead of him, and hurrying on with deeper lines of anxiety on his face, and with furtive looks into the gurgling current, through the ragged ice.

Thank Heaven! here's a footprint at last on the path before him, like an indentation of the downy snow; and there are more where the broad sprays of cedar sheltered them; and on they go before him, one by one—faltering, swift, irregular.

Here she had loitered, half fainting with weariness; the slender shape is deep indented in the ground, and here she had turned and looked back, perhaps wistfully.

Perhaps she had heard the mournful "Gerry! where are you, Gerry?"

Now the river was slipping between the banks, black and noiseless. On went the little footprints, and on went Grantham.

He saw something white, spanning the narrow stream not far ahead; the forests were thinning; and smooth fields curved down to the river's brink on the opposite side.

He followed the little footprints to the thing that spanned the river; it was two narrow planks, covered with snow.

He followed the little footprints out along the planks to the middle of the stream.

Black waters rushed beneath him; silver moonlight bathed the snowy scene around him, but the little footprints stopped on the middle of the bridge.

(To be continued.)

SCIENCE.

THE OLD TOWER, DUNDEE.—This interesting structure is about to be restored. Mr. Scott, who was called in, reported that he had not been able to meet with any distinct account of its erection, but he supposes it to date from the close of the fourteenth century, when Scottish architecture assumed a very distinctive and national form. The cost of restoration would be at least 5,000*l.* and possibly might exceed that sum. It is understood that 3,300*l.* have been already subscribed; and that operations will be soon begun.

NEW ALARM SIGNALS FOR TRAINS.—M. Hermann has invented a new system of alarm signals, applicable for day and night. The ordinary carriage lamp is replaced by a special one, which is lifted above the top of the carriage by a spring acted upon by a button within, while in the daytime the same action shows a small flag; in either case a continual peal of bells is produced in aid of the other signals. In case of the train being stopped at night by an accident all the lamps may be lifted up, and at once throw a light on the line, and form a signal of distress that would be visible at a considerable distance in the open way.

The bridge now in process of erection across the Mississippi at St. Louis is one of the wonders of the age. It is to be a tubular, cast steel, arch bridge, supported by the abutments and two piers; the latter are 515*ft.* apart, and 497*ft.* each from its nearest abutment, making three spans of about 500*ft.* each. Its greatest span is the same as that of the Kuilenberg Bridge over the Leek, an arm of the Rhine, in Holland. Telford's suspension bridge across the Menai Straits has a span of 570*ft.* The Victoria tubular iron bridge of Montreal exceeds this greatly in length, being 6600*ft.* (1¼ miles), but it rests upon twenty-four piers, and its spans are mainly only 275*ft.* The suspension bridge at Niagara spans 821*ft.*, and is 245*ft.* above the water. The East River Bridge will span 1600*ft.*, at a height midway of 130*ft.*

NILS ERICSON.—The Swedish *Aftonbladet* of the 8th September, contains the following notice of the celebrated Swedish engineer Nils Ericson:—"With this great constructor of canals and railways, Sweden has lost not only its greatest engineer, but also one of its best men in every respect. Nils Ericson has written his name in the history of the civilisation of Sweden, and as long as an engine runs through the valleys of Sweden, and as long as a vessel safely passes the wild waterfalls of Tralhattan, his name will be kept in grateful remembrance. His father was Olaf Ericson, an ironmaster as Langbanshyttan, in Wermland, who had two sons—Nils, born in 1802, and his brother John, in 1803, both of whom have done so much credit to their country: Nils, as an administrator and constructor of canals and railways; John, still living in America, and well known through his many inventions in mechanics and naval architecture. John Ericson's greatest engineering works are the Swedish Government railways construction, the reconstruction of Tralhatta Canal, the Dachs at Stockholm, and the Canal Salma in Finland.

THE DRAWINGS FOR THE HOUSES OF PARLIAMENT.—We have reason to believe that the law officers of the Crown have declared that the drawings for the Houses of Parliament are the property of the Crown, and that these have been formally demanded from the architect. Whether their opinion applies to other cases we do not know. Doubtless, however, it refers only to this special case, in which there may or may not be peculiar circumstances. It will now be for Mr. Barry to comply or not, as he may think proper. He has shown himself ready to support the rights of the profession, and if called on by the general body and indemnified by it against expenses, would probably still further resist, and allow the question to be tried in his name. We cannot expect, however, that personally he will longer refuse compliance; no friend, indeed, would advise him to array himself individually in a court of law against the Government, to whom he is at the same time looking for future employment. Unless, therefore, the profession at once unmistakably declares itself on the subject, he will doubtless now feel himself bound to place the drawings at the disposal of the Government, with a firm, though respectful, protest.

MAX SCHAFFNER has recently made some observations on the action of sulphuretted hydrogen. When a workman remains for days or weeks in an atmosphere containing a very small quantity of sulphuretted hydrogen, the symptoms are loss of ap-

petite and headache. The sudden respiration of a large quantity of the gas produces immediate insensibility, as if the person had been shot by a bullet; all the muscles become rigid and motionless, the eyes are staring, and the lungs give out a rustling sound. Brought into the open air, and the head washed with cold water, the patient revives in a few minutes, and complains of lassitude, but not of any pain. Too long delay in such an atmosphere would be certain death, and probably a painless one. In one instance a workman who had been rendered insensible by the gas, on his recovery had his combativeness so much aroused that he attacked the bystanders, and was with difficulty kept in bounds. The action of the gas upon the eyes is to inflame them; they become red and swollen, and finally closed, with severe pain. As a remedy, a wash composed of one third of a grain of corrosive sublimate in three ounces of water was applied. A mixture of air and sulphuretted hydrogen is remarkably explosive. A wire heated red hot, and allowed to cool until its colour is dark, is sufficiently hot to occasion the explosion of the mixture. The presence of a small quantity of water vapour will prevent the ignition of the gases. Great care should be observed in factories where sulphuretted hydrogen is likely to be produced, as its action is subtle, and liable to occasion unexpected explosions, as well as loss of life from its poisonous effects upon the system.

HOW ICEBERGS ARE FORMED.

MR. DUNMORE, the photographer who accompanied the Bradford art expedition last year to Greenland, publishes a very interesting description of the appearance of Greenland, its glaciers, etc. He says:

"The glacier comes moving slowly down from the mountains, a great river of ice, thousands of feet deep, sometimes ten miles wide, to the fiord or bay at the foot of the mountain. The Alpine glaciers roll down into the warm valleys, and there, warmed by the sun, melt away like a piece of wax before a candle, and form brooks and rivers. But in Greenland they cannot do that, it is too cold. Therefore, as the ice at the mouth of the glacier is pushed forward to the water's edge, it must break off in pieces and fall in; and such pieces are icebergs. When they break off, the glacier is said by the natives to 'calve,' or an 'iceberg is born.'

"I can give you no idea of what a beautiful sight it is to see an iceberg break off; but we, who have seen it, will never forget it. Think of a mass of ice as big as the space of ground covered by Brighton, falling into the sea, and of the tremendous crash that occurs when it breaks away from its fellows, and they give it a parting salute as they groan and growl their last farewell. Now see the waves leap up forty feet into the air, washing and lashing the glacier with spray, and sweeping everything away not strong enough to bear the shock; then watch the new-born berg as it rocks in the sea like a huge porpoise, up and down, dropping here and there portions of itself, which dive down and reappear in all directions, and you can imagine faintly what it is to see a glacier 'calve an iceberg.' It is a long time before the trouble of the waters ends, or before the new-born babe ceases to be rocked, and is still enough to have its picture made. It is a sight one never tires of."

TORPEDOES.

It was in 1803 that a man named Fulton proposed to Bonaparte a kind of infernal machine, which, he promised, should have the effect of destroying any ship afloat in a few seconds. Fulton was allowed to make an experiment. The first was successful, but in his next attempt he failed, and the emperor refused to countenance him further. The Crimean war was the next occasion in which torpedoes appear to have been used. But neither in the Baltic nor Black Sea did the allied fleets receive any serious damage from them. From this time to the late American civil war, little seemed to have been done in the improved construction of these formidable engines of destruction. The Confederate States had a most extensive seaboard to protect, and at the same time were much crippled in its defence, through want of war material. In this instance, as in many others, "necessity was the mother of invention," and in an incredibly short time they proved that they had created a most efficient mode of defence. The real history of the torpedo seems here to commence. Hitherto, little actual experience had been gained, but now the sinking in a few seconds of time some of the enemy's heaviest ships was the best proof of success. For this success was more real than apparent, inasmuch as not only was the attacking ship sunk, but in doing so it had the effect of itself forming a defence by creating an obstruction; at the same time, the enemy had to be extremely cautious in all future attacks, to guard against the disastrous effects of the hidden foe.

We find the earliest description of torpedo consisted of an iron or wooden receptacle for the explosive charge, which was fired by means of a slow

match, the torpedo having first been placed against the doomed ship.

We next come to the contrivance known under the name of the demijohn torpedo. This consisted of a small tub or iron cask, containing the powder, which was fired by what was called a friction tube, effected by means of a connection with the shore. But as the operator on shore always ran great risks of being killed by the enemy's fire, it was thought desirable to dispense with such a person; in other words, so to construct the torpedo that it should explode on coming in contact with any vessel.

This brings us to that method which has rendered most essential service, and still maintains a high position, as one of the most destructive means of submarine attack.

These torpedoes were generally constructed either of half-inch cast-iron, or else of strong oaken casks, bound with wrought-iron hoops. The charge averaged 50lbs. of powder, and the method of firing was by a mixture of sulphuric acid with potassium. These two ingredients were placed in contact with the charge, but in separate glass tubes, which were broken by means of a simple but ingenious communication with the exterior of the torpedo. These torpedoes were found eminently practical, more particularly when attached to piles or frames, which themselves formed obstructions in a channel.

We now come to the method of firing the charge by means of percussion, that is, by means of the ordinary percussion cap. This also proved most satisfactory, and a torpedo fired on this principle was much used by the Confederates in the James River, Charlestown Harbour, and in Mobile Bay. The chief objection to it was the liability of its becoming useless through the attachment of marine worms, etc. In fact, it was proved on more than one occasion that this was the only cause of the non-action of the charge.

THE PEARLS OF ERIN;

OR,

THE HALF SISTERS.

CHAPTER III.

For a moment that seemed to each like an eternity, Lord Tresham and the Lady Kathleen regarded each other through the deep gloom of the lonely Scottish church in an appalled and awful silence. The minister crept down from his desk, and stood in the background of the group, pale with sudden alarm. His wife and her ladyship's maid drew also silently nearer.

But the figure of the strange and sinister intruder who had usurped Lord Tresham's place at the altar and tricked him of his bride did not change in its attitude of triumph. The pale, faint gleams of moonlight that stole in through the dim and dusty windows showed through the thick shadows the evilly exultant smile that curved his lips, overspread his face, and gleamed mockingly from his eyes.

Lord Tresham as yet paid no heed to this man. He had eyes only for the bride who had been stolen from him—for the white and trembling Kathleen, whose anguished, incredulous face was turned to him in a desperate pleading and despair.

"What does this mean?" his lordship asked, at last, in a strange and husky voice, breaking the terrible silence. "Speak, in Heaven's name, Kathleen!"

"I don't know," answered the Lady Kathleen, in a wild, broken voice. "I thought it was you, my lord. Until you came in, I had not detected the cheat. The church was so dark, and I was so agitated, and I looked for no one but you—"

His lordship set his teeth together, and drew his breath hard.

He turned abruptly from the Lady Kathleen to the minister.

"How is it, Mr. Cowan?" he asked, still in that husky voice. "Is—*is* her ladyship married?"

The minister, a naturally timid man, who was overwhelmed with distress at the strange turn affairs had taken, bowed his head in assent.

There was a moment's pause. Then his lordship spoke again.

"Is the marriage legal?" he asked.

The Lady Kathleen lifted her drooping head with a thrill of reviving hope.

The minister hesitated, then replied in a distressed voice:

"This is a terrible situation, my lord. I don't know what relief the laws of England, or the Divorce Court, will yield her ladyship, but I am constrained to say that I believe this marriage to be legal."

A low mocking laugh came from the strange bridegroom.

That laugh aroused the tiger in the breast of the cheated lord. He was tempted to spring upon his enemy in a deadly assault, but he controlled his pas-

sions with a powerful effort, and addressed himself again to the minister.

"Does not the fact that this miscreant impersonation does not invalidate the marriage?" he asked, with supernatural calmness. "The lady had no intention of marrying him, and even the Scottish law cannot hold her bound."

"I have never known a case just like this," said the minister, "but marriages are valid when one of the contracting parties conceals his or her identity under an assumed name, the other party believing the name to be the true one. In this case we have a gross fraud, but I firmly believe her ladyship to be legally bound."

"I do not," cried Lord Tresham. "No law can uphold this fraud and deceit. The Lady Kathleen will never drag this experience linked with her name into a divorce court. She repudiates this fraudulent marriage. It shall be as if it had not been. We will take our places before the altar, and you shall marry us now."

"I cannot!" interrupted the minister, with agitation. "I dare not, my lord. The Lady Kathleen is already married. Let her seek justice at the proper tribunal. To marry again, with this marriage unannulled, would be to commit bigamy."

Again the sinister bridegroom laughed mockingly. Lord Tresham turned abruptly upon his enemy, and for the first time looked at him fully, keenly, and intently. Until this moment he had been so absorbed in the wreck of his happiness, and in his own and Lady Kathleen's despair, as to pay but little heed to him who had wrought all this misery. But now he seemed to arouse himself like a lion from a trance.

The light in the dim old church was so faint and gloomy that he could not make out the man's features distinctly. But he saw he was tall and stoutly built, with a heavy, massive frame that seemed a perfect storehouse of strength. Like Lord Tresham, the man was attired in black. His face, seen indistinctly through the gloom, was not unlike that of the man he had so foully persecuted.

Lord Tresham moved a step nearer to him, a passionate fury whitening his face and glowing in his eyes.

"This matter is to be settled between you and me, then?" cried his lordship, fiercely. "We will not need to appeal to the law. I will undertake to rid the Lady Kathleen of your claims—"

"Not here!" interrupted the minister, in a panic. "Do not profane the house of God by unseemly violence. Come with me to the manse, and we will discuss the matter and see what can be done. Let me conduct you, my poor Lady Kathleen!"

He gave his arm to the Lady Kathleen, who clung to it, shrinking close to his side, and he then led her from the church.

Lord Tresham walked on the other side of Kathleen, as one having the right. Close behind him came Mrs. Cowan, the Lady Kathleen's maid, and the sinister man who had wrought so much evil.

But once outside the old church and beyond the churchyard, Lord Tresham halted abruptly on the moonlit sward, and faced his enemy with a face so white and stern and savage that the Lady Kathleen also came to a halt, uttering a low cry of terror.

Mrs. Cowan echoed the cry.

"This is no place for you!" said Mr. Cowan, addressing his wife. "Go back to the manse, and take her ladyship's maid with you."

Mrs. Cowan obeyed, and walked away, accompanied by the Lady Kathleen's maid. The chief actors in the little tragedy were thus left to themselves.

"Now, sir," cried Lord Tresham, fiercely, advancing a few steps nearer his enemy, "we will settle this matter. But first tell me who you are."

His eyes fairly blazed as they scrutinised the face of Kathleen's bridegroom. His lordship had been for three years her ladyship's constant suitor, and had known all her London friends. Yet he had never seen this man before. Her acquaintance with him, he rapidly thought, must have been very secret or of a remote date. His fierce gaze photographed the man's face upon his soul for ever.

It was an evilly handsome face, and as different from Lord Tresham's now, when plainly seen in the moonlight, as darkness is different from light. Except in the dark old church, under circumstances of peculiar agitation and anxiety, he could never have passed himself off as Lord Tresham. He was dark-browed, with black hair, bold black eyes, a shallow complexion, and a sneering, sensual, wicked-looking mouth, half hidden in a forest of black beard, which fell in shaggy lengths low on his breast. This beard he had carefully tucked under the lapel of his coat when he entered the church; but it had now made its escape, constituting one of his most prominent features.

"If you wish to know who I am, my lord," he said, "I have already told you that I am the husband of the Lady Kathleen Connor. If I had not been married to her to-night, but had simply appeared at

your bridal, my very presence must have prevented your marriage with her. If you desire further information in regard to me, permit me to refer you to my charming bride. Kathleen!"

He spoke her name imperiously. Something in his tones seemed to touch some hidden chord in her ladyship's soul. She started from Mr. Cowan's arm, and looked up wildly, as she might have looked upon one who had risen from the grave.

"Nicol!" she faltered, recoiling several paces, her face whitening with an awful horror. "Great Heaven! Nicol Bassantyne!"

"Nicol Bassantyne, at your service!" said her bridegroom, his evil face all aglow with exultation. "You seem surprised to see me, Kathleen!"

The Lady Kathleen uttered a wailing, anguished cry.

"Alive!" she whispered. "I thought you were dead! Oh, Heaven! pity me!"

She tottered back, clinging to the arm of the minister for support. Her lovely face was blanched to a death pallor. Her blue eyes were full of a wild horror. Lord Tresham forgot his own anguish and wrongs in her utter misery.

"Don't take it so hard, Kathleen!" said Bassantyne, with a triumphant smile. "I might not have announced myself in this theatrical manner, but I called on you at Kildare Castle, and was told that you were in the garden. I followed you out on the rocks, and chanced to overhear Lord Tresham's declaration of love, and proposition for an immediate marriage. I knew why you dared not marry him openly, with all the pomp and glory of a fashionable wedding. You feared, in that case, that some ghost of the past would arise to confront you. There are two or three to whom your secret is known, and you feared that they would hasten to reveal that secret to Lord Tresham, and so cover you with shame and ignominy! You were right. The private marriage was the only one suitable for you! I followed you over here, intending to reveal myself at the proper moment and stop your marriage. Lord Tresham's brief absence from the church suggested a better course. I took his place—with what effect you have seen!"

He laughed softly to himself, gloating over his triumph and her anguish.

There was a brief silence. Lord Tresham stood apart, strange suspicions struggling in his soul. He began to comprehend that this sinister intruder was connected with the Lady Kathleen's secret, and he vaguely felt that she was in some way in this man's power. But not a doubt of her found lodging in his mind. His trust in her remained unshaken.

"My little ruse was fair enough," said Bassantyne, watching her ladyship furtively. "All is fair in love and war," says the old proverb. There is no use in fretting, Kathleen. If you haven't changed greatly in the last five years, you will soon compel your proud spirit to submit to circumstances. It is true that by my inopportune return I have cheated you of a brilliant title, but I am rich and honourable, and I love you! Let these facts reconcile you to your fate!"

He moved nearer to her, his eyes fixed gloatingly on her drooping head and despairing face.

"Stand back!" cried Lord Tresham, interposing. "Do not insult the Lady Kathleen by your professions of love. Whoever you are, Mr. Nicol Bassantyne, do not think that your vile fraud of this night has given you any authority over her! She has too many friends to be given up to a cheating adventurer who foully personates another man at the altar. She shall be freed, if we have to go through the Divorce Court to effect her freedom. Any publicity must be preferable to the chains you have placed upon her. The Lady Kathleen is still under my protection, sir, and you must answer to me for this cowardly crime!"

"Very well," said Bassantyne, coolly, "I am willing to fight you now, if that's what you want. But before we proceed to blows, let us understand what we are to fight for. You conceive the Lady Kathleen to be grossly injured by my taking your place at the marriage altar. Now, if she is satisfied, you can have no reason to find fault. Is not that so?"

"But I am not satisfied!" cried the Lady Kathleen, passionately.

"Not satisfied, Kathleen?" and Bassantyne arched his black brows, in seemingly astonished inquiry. "You wish, then, that I had permitted you to marry Lord Tresham?"

"No, no!" moaned the Lady Kathleen, shuddering. "I thought you could not be so infatuated as that! You hope for a divorce, perhaps?"

"I hope for nothing," returned the Lady Kathleen, wringing her hands despairingly. "I must do as I have done for years—submit to my fate, Barry," she added, turning to Lord Tresham, who still stood a little apart, dark, gloomy, and stern, yet with a great agony expressed in his dark eyes, "there must be no fighting for me! If you ever loved me, spare me that great grief."

"If I ever loved you! Oh, Kathleen!"

His anguished voice aroused the Lady Kathleen from the depths of her despair. The sight of his suffering lent her a factitious strength. Loosening her hold on the minister's arm, she moved towards Lord Tresham, saying:

"I must have a few words with you alone, my lord—for the last time! Come with me to the beach."

He gave her his arm, and they walked down to the sands, on which lay the boats rocking in the moonlight.

The Lady Kathleen was the first to speak.

"Barry," she said, "if I had adhered to my first resolves, this would never have happened. Would to Heaven I had refused to come here to-night. Would that I had refused you, as I have done so often before. But do not let the events of to-night have any blighting influence on your life. You must go away and forget me—"

"And leave you to the persecution of that scoundrel? Never! Never!"

"It will be best, Barry. For my sake, you must go. It cannot be wrong for me to tell you, now that this great gulf has opened between us, that I love you more than I love my life! I have loved you for years," and her passionate voice trembled. "But for years I dared not acknowledge to you that love, because I have always had that fearful expectancy of something terrible in the future. For years I have lived in a very terror of dread. Only a few months since, that terror was dissipated by a report that he—this man—was dead! Yet even then, when I read the notice of his death in a foreign paper, I dared not dream of marriage. I should never have dared marry you openly, with the pomp of a fashionable wedding, as he said. I should have been afraid that something might have come between us to prevent the marriage, even at the last minute. I have enemies who trade upon my secret, and who might have chosen to reveal it to you at any moment."

"My poor Kathleen!" said Lord Tresham, in a yearning tenderness. "And this man—this Bassantyne—knows your secret?"

"Yes—yes!"

"Tell it to me, Kathleen. You need a true friend. Let me hear the whole story, and judge how much of terror there is in it. Perhaps these enemies of yours magnify the importance of the secret. I can help you—"

"It is too late—too late! No one can help me now. I cannot tell you the story, my lord, but I can say," and she lifted her head proudly, while a scarlet flush stained the whiteness of her cheeks, "that my worst crimes consisted in girlish folly and imprudence! The name of Kathleen Connor is as unsullied as on the day I received it at my baptism!"

"Is it necessary to say that to me, Kathleen?" demanded Lord Tresham. "Do I not know your pure soul, your glorious, untainted nature? It is because I know them so well that I entreat to be taken into your confidence. Your enemies may be magnifying the importance of the secret—"

"No—no! I comprehend its importance only too well!"

"You will have to tell the whole story, will you not, when you sue for a divorce?"

"I shall never sue for a divorce!"

"Kathleen!"

"We are parted for ever, Barry. It was fortunate—even providential—that our marriage was interrupted to-night. So long as Nicol Bassantyne lives, I must not see you again. Oh, Barry! this night holds our parting!"

"You mean to acknowledge this marriage, then? To live with this scoundrel as his wife—"

The Lady Kathleen flushed again.

"No, I do not!" she said. "I would die first! He may proclaim our marriage, if he chooses. I shall not deny it. But I will never live with him—never! I cannot tell you how much I loathe this man, my lord, and yet, strange as it may seem, this strange marriage of to-night is a relief to me!"

Lord Tresham uttered an exclamation of astonishment.

"It puts an end to all my terror and dread," murmured the Lady Kathleen. "It is well for you and me that it has happened. You must forget me, and find some one more worthy of your proud old name than Kathleen Connor! You are a proud man, my lord, as you have the right to be, and it is better that your mad marriage with me was interrupted. And now a last word, my lord. I beg you not to provoke a hostile meeting with Nicol Bassantyne. For my sake, do nothing to peril your life—that life which is dearer than all the world to me! And though we are separated for ever, Barry, always remember that I loved you."

"And a last word with you, Kathleen!" cried Lord Tresham, impatiently. "You have denied me a knowledge of your secret, which it seems you share

with two or three black-mailing wretches. Now hear me! There is no obstacle between us which I cannot surmount. I swear to break the bonds you—wretch has fixed upon you! I swear to dissipate all the shadows that envelop you! I swear to discover your secret, to scatter its terrors, to relieve you from your hideous thralldom—to make you my wife! Until these things are accomplished, I will know no peace, no joy. From this moment I set myself to the task of freeing you from the coils of your enemies!"

He caught her to his bosom, kissing her with a yearning, passionate fervour.

They were still lingering in that embrace when steps were heard behind them and Bassantyne's sneering voice broke in upon them.

"Humph!" he said. "This is a pleasant sight for the eyes of a newly made husband. Come, my Lady Kathleen Bassantyne. My boat is waiting, and you—come your maid. We must be off, if you don't want Kildare Castle to be in a terrible commotion."

The Lady Kathleen gently loosened herself from Lord Tresham's frenzied clasp.

"You will go back with me?" his lordship asked. "I dare not," she whispered, faintly. "But I fear nothing. My maid will be with me. And you will be near."

She turned from him with a breaking heart.

Mr. and Mrs. Cowan, with her ladyship's maid, were approaching the beach. The Lady Kathleen advanced to meet them, listened to their expressions of pity and sympathy, and then bade the minister and his wife farewell.

Bassantyne then conducted his bride to the boat, the Lady Kathleen's maid following. The lady and her attendants took their seats, Bassantyne pushed off the little craft, and sprang in. Then he set his sail, and the boat went skimming over the moonlit channel towards Point Kildare.

Lord Tresham followed closely in their wake, his anguished glances seldom wavering from the slender, girlish figure which dropped low in the stern of Bassantyne's boat.

The Scottish minister and his wife, with tears and forebodings, lingered long on the sands, watching the receding sloop, and speculating upon the future of the three whose fortunes had so strangely become entangled.

"Heaven guide them!" sighed Mr. Cowan. "There's a dark future before the bonny Lady Kathleen—a dark, dark future!"

CHAPTER IV.

WHILE the singular events we have narrated were occurring to the Lady Kathleen Connor and her two suitors, the Lady Nora Kildare was face to face with the great question which had arisen in her own life. The announcement of the identity of the rival claimant to the Kildare estates at first almost stupefied her.

"You Lord Redmond Kildare!" she exclaimed, incredulously. "Impossible! My uncle Redmond left no family. This story is incredible!"

Redmond Kildare's cheeks flushed.

"You accuse me of being an impostor, then?" he demanded.

"I have not yet formed an opinion," returned the young Lady Nora, haughtily. "But I think it not a little strange that you should come direct to me, instead of going to my guardian!"

"Would you have preferred to hear the story through Sir Russel Ryan?" asked Redmond Kildare. "Since you and I are of one blood, is it not better that you should hear the truth from my lips? I fancied that you were just enough to hear me, examine my proofs, and make up your own mind without recourse to others. Then the matter could be submitted to Sir Russel Ryan and the lawyers. It is my wish, when I shall have established my case, to effect a compromise with you. I do not wish to rob you of your wealth, but rather to share it with you!"

"You are certainly modest in your demands, if you can prove yourself the heir!" said Lady Nora, her proud young face palming slightly. "I am willing to examine your proofs, sir, but my opinion as to their value can amount to little. They must be submitted to keen and experienced lawyers, before your claims can be admitted!"

Lord Redmond bowed assent, and displayed his formidable bundle of documents. He was in the very act of untying the red tape that bound them together, when his glance fell upon a large oil portrait, one of a pair, which hung over the low carved marble mantel-shelf.

The portrait was that of Lady Nora's grandfather, the fifteenth Earl of Kildare.

Lord Redmond stared at this picture a few moments in close scrutiny, and then walked up to it, and turning, deliberately faced the Lady Nora.

"Compare my face with that of this portrait," he

said. "He was my grandfather and yours. Have I not his blood in my veins? Here is one of my strongest proofs, and one I had not counted upon."

The Lady Nora complied with his request, comparing his features with those of the portrait. The resemblance was certainly most striking. The rival claimant possessed the Kildare features most unmistakably, with, however, some deteriorations. He had the dark complexion, the brown eyes, the high forehead and dark hair that characterised the Kildares, but his forehead, unlike the late earl's, was narrow and retreating. He had the square chin and determined mouth that had belonged to generations of Kildares, but with him the latter feature lacked the frank, open, genial smile that the Lady Nora so well remembered as belonging to her kindred, and possessed instead an expression of secretiveness and cunning which the young girl instinctively disliked. Yet the result of her scrutiny impressed her strongly with the conviction that he was what he claimed—a Kildare.

"You certainly look like my grandfather," admitted the Lady Nora. "But the resemblance proves nothing."

"It proves a great deal," declared Lord Redmond, "when it is added to other evidences. Be kind enough to examine them, Lady Nora."

He placed a chair for her by the round centre-table, and turned up the light in the mellow globes of the great chandelier.

The Lady Nora took the proffered seat, and Lord Redmond placed his packet of documents in her hands. Then he sat down beside her to direct her examination.

"I have been a little awkward at this business, Lady Nora," he said, smiling, "in my desire to break the news to you as gently as possible. Here is a letter from your second cousin, the Honourable Michael Kildare, of Dublin. Perhaps I would have done well to present this letter at first."

"You would indeed!" said Lady Nora. "Mr. Michael Kildare is one of my truest and most trustworthy friends. My father had every faith in him. Mr. Michael Kildare was papa's lawyer, and is one of the most zealous upholders of our family name. You said, I think, that he had recognised your claims?" she added, with a sudden remembrance.

"Read the letter for yourself, Lady Nora," suggested Lord Redmond. "It will tell you more than I can do."

He took the letter out of the packet, and placed it in her hands. It was encased in a long envelope, and heavily sealed with red wax. It was addressed to the Lady Nora Kildare, and had a very lawyer-like appearance.

The young girl broke the seal and perused the enclosure. The letter ran as follows:

"Dublin, Tuesday, Sept. 14, 1869.

"TO THE LADY NORA KILDARE.—My dear young Lady Nora, this letter will be presented to you by one of whose existence you have never known, but who is yet very closely related to you by the ties of kindred. Before you read this he will have told you his story. Pardon the cowardice which keeps me from you at such a moment. I shall visit you at Point Kildare to-morrow. This cowardice of mine, dear Lady Nora, has kept me silent all these years, but the time has at last come when cowardice becomes criminality.

"I need not say that all my sympathies are with you in this matter. The daughter of Lord Fitzgerald Kildare should be the owner and mistress of Point Kildare, and to maintain her supremacy I have been so long criminally silent.

"But the time has come to speak. As your late father's lawyer, and as the associate guardian with Sir Russel Ryan of your fortune and person, and as Sir Russel's Irish lawyer, my situation is most painful.

"The case is simply this:

"Your grandfather, the late earl, had two sons Redmond and Fitzgerald. Redmond was a wild and dissipated young fellow, who married a certain actress in London. He married her secretly, and soon grew tired and ashamed of her, the more especially as she was illiterate and of previous ill-repute.

"After the birth of her son, Lord Redmond consulted me with regard to the feasibility of divorcing himself from her, and of setting aside the marriage. It was then I first learned the story of his worse than imprudent match. But as he was of age at the time of the marriage, and was familiar with the woman's previous reputation, the law could give him no relief.

"It was then he abandoned his wife.

"She loved him, it appears, and went mad at his desertion. She was placed in a lunatic asylum. The boy—Lord Redmond's lawful son—was put into the care of some honest country people. Before Lord Redmond died, he sent for me, and told me of the lad's whereabouts, and said that he could never allow

the child of his actress wife to claim the title and estates, thus robbing his own younger brother Fitzgerald, your father. He believed his boy had too much bad blood in him to do credit to the old name of Kildare. So he begged me to keep his secret until secrecy became impossible, and to have his son educated and put to some profession.

"I obeyed him implicitly. The boy was educated, and is now a man. I never told him of his identity. His position has always been humble. But by some fatality, his mother was discharged from the asylum a month since, cured! He knew, of course, that she was his parent. On being notified of her recovery, he took her to his lodgings, and she then told him the whole story. He came to me, and forced me to acknowledge the truth. He seems a well-disposed young man, and displays many of the nobler and finer qualities of our family.

"I have advised Redmond to see you first of all. I dread a scandal as I dread death. I have written to Sir Russel Ryan already. You may expect him with me at Point Kildare in the course of a day or two. It would be well to keep Redmond at the castle till we come. Do nothing rashly.

"Your affectionate cousin and guardian,

"MICHAEL KILDARE."

This letter, so startling in its announcements, and so confirmative of Lord Redmond's story, startled the Lady Nora more than all that had preceded it.

Her sweet young face deepened in its pallor. Her sunny brown eyes glowed with a startled expression. Her small head drooped as under a heavy weight. The sudden shock seemed too much for her.

Presently she looked up, forcing a faint and sickly smile.

"This letter has greatly surprised me," she said, her high, clear voice tremulous with a deep emotion. "Have you seen it?"

"I have not," replied Lord Redmond, respectfully.

"But Mr. Kildare informed me that it was a statement confirming my claims."

The Lady Nora put the letter in her pocket. Her bright, arch face, usually so gay and debonaire, was very grave and thoughtful. The letter of her trusted guardian and kinsman had produced a deeper effect upon her than she would have cared to acknowledge.

"You have other proofs, I suppose?" she asked.

"Certainly, Lady Nora," and Lord Redmond tossed over his papers with a white and shapely hand. "Here is the certificate of the marriage of Lord Redmond Kildare to Madeleine Bonham, spinster, in the parish church of St. Mary's, Newington, Surrey."

The Lady Nora examined it.

"I can't tell whether it is genuine or not," she observed. "I must leave its examination to Sir Russel. Of course it will be necessary to look at the church registers, as this is but a copy."

Lord Redmond bowed, flushing redly. "It is well to be cautious," he said, coldly. "One does not relinquish a princely home like Point Kildare until convinced that resistance is useless. Here is the certificate of my birth."

The Lady Nora looked at that also.

"And here," continued Lord Redmond, "are certificates from the people in whose care I spent my earliest years. There are other less important papers. For the rest, I shall depend upon living witnesses. The clergyman and both the witnesses of Lord Redmond Kildare's marriage to Madeleine Bonham are still living. The doctor who presided at my birth also lives. And last, but not least, as the phrase goes, Madeleine Kildare also lives, and is in her right mind. Does not the case look plain?"

"It looks plain enough," said Lady Nora.

"And you are convinced of the merit and justice of my claims?" asked Lord Redmond, fixing a keen gaze upon her.

"I do not say that," replied Lady Nora, haughtily. "When I can say that in all sincerity, all that remains to me is to leave the castle, resigning everything to you. Either you are or I am owner here. You have made out a strong case, which I must leave to older and wiser heads than mine to consider."

"Let me hope that my entrance into the castle as master will not be the signal for your leaving as mistress," said Lord Redmond, gravely, half tenderly. "I want to set myself right with the world, but I have no wish to despoil you. Can there not be some compromise?"

"I do not feel able to discuss the matter tonight," said the Lady Nora. "Let us defer this discussion until my guardians come. You will remain at the castle until then, will you not?"

Lord Redmond accepted the invitation without hesitation. He had evidently expected to be asked to remain.

"My luggage is over at Glenarm," he said.

"It shall be sent for in the morning. Mr. Kildare informs me that he will be here in a day or two with

Sir Russel Ryan. I should like you to remain to meet them."

Lord Redmond expressed his thanks warmly, and declared his readiness to stay.

The Lady Nora arose and touched the silken bell-pull, and then resumed her seat. A few minutes later an old servant, gray-haired, and with an honest, faithful countenance, made his appearance.

"Let the oak room be prepared immediately!" said the Lady of Kildare, in the gentle, kindly manner that endeared her so to all her retainers. "This gentleman will remain a few days at the castle."

The servant bowed and withdrew.

"I notice," said Lord Redmond, with a constrained smile, "that you have not yet addressed me by any name, Lady Nora. Am I to be nameless while I remain here?"

The Lady Nora coloured.

"If I call you Lord Redmond," she answered, "I shall be tacitly acknowledging my belief in your claims. And that I can't do yet."

"Call me Mr. Kildare, then. That, at least, you can safely do, without compromising yourself, most fair and most suspicious of ladies!" and Lord Redmond smiled again.

The Lady Nora was cruelly embarrassed.

"I am not too suspicious, I think," she said, with an effort. "You do not think how much I have at stake—"

"I do think, Lady Nora," he interposed, quickly. "Forgive me. You have the finest place in Antrim, the grandest home, linked with a thousand associations. You have retainers and friends, your family pride—"

"More than these!" said the young girl, a spasm of pain convulsing her features. "More than you know or can dream! A thousand cherished hopes and plans— But enough! I shall lose my courage if I talk more on this subject."

She arose, and walked to and fro with quick, nervous movements.

Lord Redmond's eyes followed her in a pitying gaze, in which, however, was a gleam of deep satisfaction.

"My dear Lady Nora," he said, "all this trouble and pain are uncalled for. I am willing to compromise the matter, and have no wish to disturb your possession of the castle. All your little plans can go on just the same—"

She put up her hand in a gesture commanding silence, and continued her walk.

Lord Redmond's face, as he continued to watch her, might have given her a hint in regard to the "compromise" to which he had so often alluded.

The young girl's glowing beauty, so rarely radiant, so pure and dainty and sweet, had made its due impression on his heart. Already he was thinking with high hopes of owning Kildare, with the Lady Nora as his bride.

He was tempted to unfold these thoughts to her, but prudence restrained him.

"It will all come round in due time," he thought, with a thrill of joy. "It will have to come! I know she will consent to the 'compromise' sooner or later. She won't be turned out of the castle, when she can continue to be here by becoming my wife!"

They kept up a desultory conversation for an hour or more longer, and then Lord Redmond, professing to be tired, was shown to his room.

Left to herself the young Lady Nora turned down the lights and opened the curtains, going out on the shaded balcony, which overhung the lonely, moonlit sea.

And here she sank down in the shadow of swaying ivy leaves that made a bower of one end of the balcony, and the tears rushed to her lovely eyes, and a great despair convulsed her face.

"I'm afraid it's only too plain!" she said to herself. "I'm afraid that he is the real heir of Kildare, and I am only a penniless usurper! And I wanted to enrich poor Larry! Larry is in debt, and can never extricate himself without assistance. And I hoped and planned to be the good angel that was to redeem his estate, and enrich him and give him back his old position in the county! And now I shall be as poor as he, and we can never marry! I shall fight this man's claims until fighting is useless, for his success will prove our desolation and ruin. Oh, why was this trouble sent to us now, just when the world looked so bright, and I knew that Larry loved me?"

(To be continued.)

NEAR Resende, Rio de Janeiro, a poor widow, named Maria dos Dolores Bueno, died on the 22nd of July, at the estimated age of 100 years. Although robust up to the last day, she appeared then to have a presentiment of death, and accordingly dressed herself in a shroud, laid herself tranquilly out with a lit candle in her hand, and expired.—*Anglo-Brazilian Times.*



[THE FRENCH MINISTER FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS.]

M. JULES FAVRE.

THERE is a very rude old English proverb which ascribes the invariable good luck that follows lawyers to their relationship with an evil spirit who exercises an occult influence over mundane affairs; and although nobody ever does or ever did believe in this most improper and libellous piece of impudence, yet it cannot be denied that lawyers are lucky, even in England, and get a very decent share of the good things that so frequently come in their way.

But if lawyers be lucky in England, if rich clients, big lawsuits, snug places, large incomes, and great influence reward them here, how much better still do they prosper in France. In that favoured land it has happened over and over again that a lawyer has been Prime Minister, and has been able, not merely to make the Government give him nice perquisites, but actually to be competent to give them to himself. How deplorable a fact it is to remember that England has never had a lawyer for a Prime Minister.

It is not, therefore, at all remarkable, when the foregoing considerations are borne in mind, that of the eleven distinguished gentlemen who seized the government of France on the 4th of September, 1870, no less than five—viz., MM. Thiers, Favre, Gambetta, Cremieux, and Picard—are lawyers, and that the important departments of the Foreign Affairs, Home Office, Justice, and Finance, are reserved to that body; although be it remembered that when they have thus taken, as it were, the outside, inside, brains, and breeches pocket of France they have still left the fighting by sea and land to the sailor Fouriehon and the soldiers Trochu and Leflo, who have the control of the war and its possibilities of glory or failure to themselves. In these particulars they have rudely declined to imitate the great, glorious, and free nation for whose benefit these columns are written, which rejoices in the presence

of lawyers at the head of its military and naval departments.

It must be conceded of the legal gentleman whose actions are the theme of this paper that he might have had his own price for his services at any time had he been corruptible, and it will be seen that in the course of his life he has not only occasionally disagreed with his chosen friends for the sake of consistency, but he has now and then carried consistency so far that he has actually disagreed with himself.

Jules Claude Gabriel Favre is a native of that eminently peaceful town Lyons, where he was born on the 21st of March, 1809—the day being, as readers of Old Moore's Almanack are aware, the first of the spring season. He studied the law, and was called to the bar of his native city in 1830, when he immediately devoted himself to the defence of all the wandering insurgents that the Government could catch (and bring to trial; and as this passive opposition to monarchical power was too tame for his revolutionary soul, he vindicated his youthful ardour and his Republican principles by demanding, in a letter addressed to the *National*, a paper founded by Thiers in 1829, the "Total Abolition of Monarchy."

As this boon was not granted he remained in Lyons for four years more, but at last attached himself, in 1835, to the Parisian bar, where he has ever since practised with great fame and profit. His first appearance in Paris was made before the Court of Peers in his usual favourite character of defender of a party of insurgents. He began his speech with these defiant words: "I am a Republican. I know that by admitting it I weaken my cause and endanger my existence." As he had been previously associated with the defence of the Socialists and Republicans who gave so much trouble to the Monarchy of July in its earlier days, this statement did not greatly surprise his hearers, although it delighted the mob and procured him a large political following.

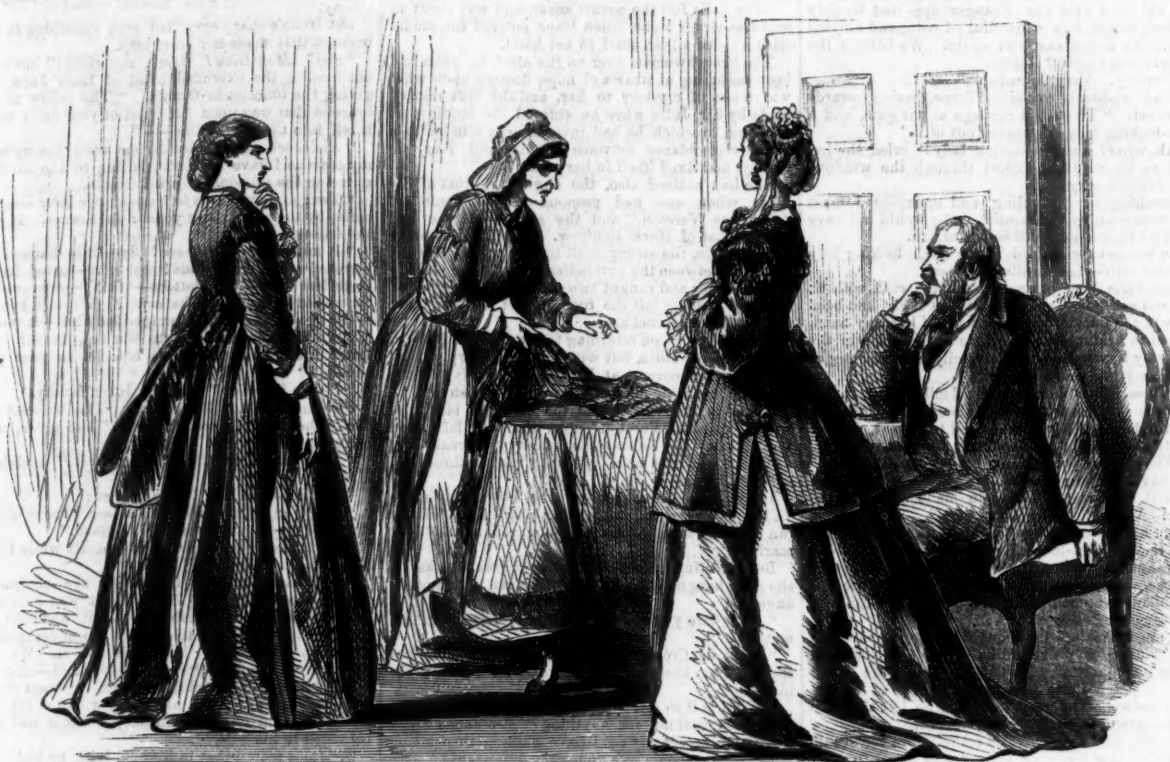
The Revolution of February, 1848, made him a member of the new Republican Government—at first as Secretary-General to the Ministry of the Interior, i.e., Home Office, and afterwards as a member of the Committee on Foreign Affairs and as Under Secretary of State for the same department. In both these positions his talent and capacity for hard work made him conspicuous, but his incapability of acting with his party was embarrassing. He voted alternately with the Right and Left of the Chamber, sometimes against the Government of which he was a member, sometimes in its favour, and sometimes at critical periods he declined to vote at all. But he allowed it to be known that as a whole he approved of the Constitution; and he did excellent work for it during the time that it preserved his approbation. From the office of the Ministry of the Interior he sent out an able Circular defining the duties of the commissioners who were charged with the establishment of the Republican system in the provinces, and guiding them in the usage of their unlimited powers, which obtained the approbation of all politicians.

If he approved of the Constitution he certainly did not approve of the President, and his opposition became more and more marked as time went on, until at last in opposing the President he actually demanded the impeachment of that functionary for sending the Expedition to Italy, although he himself had voted in its favour. It is not, therefore, very surprising that when the Coup d'Etat put the President in a really powerful position he included M. Jules Favre amongst the number of those he debarred from political life. After six years, however, the stringency of the Government rule being somewhat relaxed, he was elected a member of the Corps Législatif and returned to Paris at the beginning of 1858, where he immediately signalled himself by taking up the defence of Felice Orsini, who attempted to assassinate Napoleon III. by flinging hand grenades among the crowd assembled to see him go in state to the Opera.

He has, of course, been in opposition to the Imperial Government through all the time of its duration. He fought it over the Mexican question, over the Roman question, and over the German questions of 1864 and 1866. His constant interpellations of the Ministry were backed by Thiers, who divided with him the leadership of the Opposition; and between them the President of the Chamber and the Minister whose duty it was to answer them led a nice life. In fact, for some years their incessant activity kept the Opposition party alive. But in spite of the tremendous popularity M. Favre thus acquired, and in spite of the extraordinary excitement his orations caused among the populace, his vanity led him into a false step, which resulted in his failing to be returned to the Chamber at the general election of 1869. Relying securely upon his notoriety, he allowed himself to be put in nomination for several places, hoping thus to be able to secure the return of some of his personal friends when he had himself chosen one of the seats he counted on obtaining. But the result was that he was not successful anywhere in getting the requisite majority of votes, and in his native town his defeat was of the most annoying description, inasmuch as only 5,991 votes were recorded in his favour, while 16,585 rewarded the Communistic proclivities of the Socialist Raspail. An unexpected friend was found to help him out of his difficulty, for the election for the Second Division of Paris being void by reason of the fact that no candidate obtained a majority of the voters, the Government, who hated his opponent, Rochefort, even more than they did him, threw their influence into the scale, and an addition of more than 6,000 to the number of votes he had previously received was the result—thus landing him safely in his old position.

During his long career, M. Favre has produced many works of a political nature, the most notorious being "The Liberty of the Press," published in 1849, and "The Defence of Felice Orsini," in 1866. His literary reputation gained him the honour of a seat in the Académie Française in 1867, in the place of the famous Victor Cousin. In June, 1868, he started a weekly newspaper called *L'Electeur*, in conjunction with Ernest Picard and Hénon, his colleagues. The first number was seized, but about 40,000 were sold notwithstanding.

On the 4th of September in this year, his proposition for the dethronement of Napoleon being successful, he gave himself the Ministry for Foreign Affairs, and immediately issued a Circular announcing the change of Government in terms that disappointed everybody, from their utter want of appreciation of that state of affairs in France which was visible to the rest of the world; but he has since promulgated a much more reasonable letter, and is at this moment at the head-quarters of the Prussian King, attempting to arrange for peace. It is not too much to say that the good wishes of the world follow him upon this mission, and that the rejoicings of the world will be the result of its success.



[THE SCARF.]

FIFTEEN THOUSAND POUNDS, DEAD OR ALIVE!

CHAPTER XVII.

Who shames a liar? Break one cobweb through,
He spins the slight, self-pleasing thread anew;
Destroy his lie, or sophistry, in vain.
The creature's at his dirty work again. Pope.

"Ah!" said the baronet, with a very perceptible start and change of colour, which he in vain endeavoured to disguise by a cough. "Mark Renfrew? I have had a very slight acquaintance with a person of that name—very slight. But he could not have written this letter. Do you know any one of that name, either of you?"

"We do not," replied Irene. "We have heard, since our arrival in Little Ullsburgh, that a gentleman of that name is known in this vicinity. We have never met him. But we remember the remark often made by Captain Robert:

"If I have any worse enemy in all the world than myself, it is a villain named Mark Renfrew. A very remarkable and uncommon name, Sir Jules."

"So it is, my good woman. Pray resume your very interesting narrative."

"Neither Orania, my husband, nor myself observed the blurred name on the back of the letter when we received it. That was an after-discovery. We did not doubt at the time that the letter was genuine. Why should we?"

"Why should you, indeed! And what a question to put to me!" remarked the baronet, lifting his eyebrows to the very roots of his sandy hair. "Really!"

"We suspected nothing. So Mrs. Hayland, with her infant child, hurried to Brest within an hour after we received the note. The captain, her husband, had been gone from us almost a year then. But she did not find him at the Hôtel d'Aigle. His supposed friend, a Captain Basant, was there; and he told her that the 'Rainbow' had sailed suddenly the day before for Genoa. Captain Basant informed her, with every appearance of truth, that it was the desire of her husband that she should immediately embark for Genoa in his (Basant's) schooner, a very fast and safe sailer, as the schooner would probably overtake the 'Rainbow,' the latter being a heavy sailer, before she could pass the Straits of Gibraltar. Mrs. Hayland, unconscious of treachery, embarked immediately with her child. On the same day, in Paris, or rather on the night of that day, Captain Robert's house was burned to the ground—undoubtedly the work of an incendiary. I was badly injured. My poor husband was burned to death in the blazing house, and with

him was destroyed all our money, which was in the house at the time, in notes of the Bank of France."

"And your husband lost his life. Sad!"

"Yes; he had escaped, but not knowing, in the confusion, that I had escaped before him, he ventured into the blazing building to seek for me, and—oh, Heaven! lost his life! Poor Paul! he was ever a good and kind husband. I cannot weep—that comfort is denied me. I am dry-eyed. My tears are shed in my heart. Such tears are always flowing. Enough—I will say no more of my husband, for I know he is dead—I have seen his bones. But we are not sure that Captain Robert is dead."

Sir Jules was not sure of that either, but he said nothing.

"As I was badly burned, I remained for several months in the hospital," continued Irene. "During all that time I heard nothing from Mrs. Hayland. As soon as I was able I went in search of her—I went to Genoa. After much vain seeking, chance led me to inquire at the hospitals of the city. In one of them I found her, very ill—at times delirious. She soon recovered under my care; I am sure she would have died had I not found her. She told me what I now tell you. For several days after sailing from Brest Captain Basant's vessel struggled against head winds and a heavy sea, and Mrs. Hayland became excessively ill from sea-sickness. Perhaps you know how dreadfully prostrating that malady is?"

"I do," replied the baronet, with a grimace of disgust. "I detest the sea."

"Captain Basant had hired a nurse to attend upon Mrs. Hayland's infant, her former one having refused to accompany her to Brest. I am sure Basant bribed that nurse to remain behind. No matter, the other nurse, while on deck one day, let the infant fall into the sea."

"My child! my babe!" sobbed Mrs. Hayland at this moment, convulsed with anguish of heart. "My darling one! to think of your precious life struggling and sinking in the cold, cold, cruel sea! My child, my child! my angel babe!"

"And it sank for ever, Sir Jules. So Captain Basant told its mother when she asked for her child. Was not that misery upon misery? Oh, may Heaven aid you to forget it, my poor dear!"

"Forget it, Irene! Oh! never, never! In my dreams I see my babe struggling, sinking! sinking deeper and deeper into the depth of the cold, cruel sea! battling for its life with its little arms outstretched—and horrid, ravenous fish devouring it! Oh! Heaven! have mercy upon me! Oh, that I could forget it!" sobbed Mrs. Hayland.

"True, Sir Jules. She wakes often in the night and cries for her babe—her drowning babe—poor darling!" said Irene, kissing the beautiful head, and laying her cheek fondly upon it. "Heaven help thee, my poor, stricken one."

"Very sad—really!" remarked the baronet, during the brief pause that followed. "Pray proceed."

"When the schooner arrived at Genoa, Mrs. Hayland was very ill with brain-fever. Ah, her loss! Was it not enough to burst the brain and break the heart? She was delirious, no doubt, for she remembers nothing of when or how she was placed in the hospital. She regained her reason in the hospital, a very poor one—the hospital for destitute foreigners."

"I wonder she had not died before I found her, Sir Jules. But I nursed her—nursed her, too, with hopes that she and I would some day find her husband. We were strangers, and we could not speak Italian; but I had a little money—the proceeds from the sale of a diamond ring Captain Robert gave me when he married my adopted child. We rented a room. She began to paint, and her beautiful pictures sold rapidly. She made money fast; and we spent it fast, too, in going from city to city, seeking her husband."

"Basant had disappeared after leaving Mrs. Hayland dying, as he no doubt believed, in the hospital for destitute foreigners. We visited every sea-port of the Mediterranean, we have consumed years in this wearying search, and, so far, it has been in vain."

"Ah! But why come to Little Ullsburgh, which is a place never visited by sailors?" asked the baronet.

"I persuaded her, recently, to relinquish the search for a time, for it began to wear upon her sadly. Poor thing! so young when she married! so young to be so afflicted! so unfortunate!"

"Fortunate, Irene, in having you still near me!" murmured Mrs. Hayland.

"Aw! really! a romantic—a pathetic tale!" said Sir Jules, blandly. "I suppose you searched in Paris, also, to learn if Captain Robert had been seen there after you had left?"

"Of course! but it was more than a year after our house had been burned when we returned to Paris. The population of the quarter of the city in which we had lived was continually changing. The vacant space on which the house once stood was there, and all that we learned was from an old man who had established a kind of store upon it. He said that soon after he had built his shed upon the place a tall, handsome man had asked him and others many questions about a family that had perished in the house."

"It was believed in the neighbourhood that we all had died either in the flames or in the hospital. The old man said the stranger appeared terribly shocked, threw him a handful of coin, and hurried away. He never saw him again. We believe the stranger was Captain Robert."

"Possibly. Very improbable——"

"Ah!" suddenly exclaimed Irene, gazing towards the street. "There is a carriage at our gate, and a noble-looking lady is stepping out of it."

"Ah, what! a noble-looking lady!" cried the baronet as he rose and looked through the window. "Oh, fire and fury!"

Something very startling and unexpected must have been seen by the baronet, or he would not have used that expression with such warmth.

The baronet recognised in the noble-looking lady his hated wife—Lady Julia de Cressy.

Lady Julia bore her newly claimed rank with as lofty and self-possessed a dignity as if she had been "born in the purple," and the wave of her tiny hand, encased in bright orange kid, to the footman in the De Cressy livery was as gracefully commanding as that of any peeress in England.

Sir Jules wished her a thousand miles away, rather than to be coming to interrupt his conversation with Mrs. Hayland. He was too proud to retreat, and yet he hated being seen by her there, and just then.

"What caused your strange expression, Sir Jules?"

"I have a sprained ankle, my good woman, and I forgot it as I rose. The pain made me cry out—ahem! Why, that lady is my wife."

Then a chill came upon his heart like an ice-bath. What if this hard-faced Frenchwoman, who had an unpleasant way of staring every stranger keenly in the eyes, were to recognise in Lady Julia the deranged lady who had deserted a babe in the cabin of Irene Dugarre?

"I must remain," he thought as he resumed his seat, "and try to prevent all conversation that may lead to a recognition. Twenty-two years are a long time. I judge there is scarcely a shade of resemblance between the mad woman who left the babe and this grand lady we are to confront."

Mrs. Hayland had instantly retired from the studio on hearing that Lady de Cressy was about to enter the cottage, and felt very sorry that the lady had come just then, for Sir Jules had not yet told her when and where he had seen the person who might have been her husband.

She re-entered the studio at one door just as Lady Julia came in at another.

Lady Julia entered with her natural haughty air, not at first perceiving the baronet, who was seated in a large chair somewhat apart.

Orania and Lady Julia had never met before—at least, not since the latter had abandoned the former, when one was mad and the other an infant—but Lady Julia had heard much of the great beauty of the stranger, and, proud of her own beauty, had come to see if Mrs. Hayland's could rival hers.

For a moment the two gazed at each other in silent admiration, and the wily, vigilant baronet, whose eyes were steadily fixed upon the face of Irene Dugarre—for it was only from her he feared a recognition—saw that her eyes flashed from the features of one lady to the other, with a sudden wonder at the remarkable resemblance between them—a resemblance which, though much modified by opposite mental and moral characteristics and widely different positions, was too striking to escape the notice of the keen-eyed Frenchwoman.

"Aw, really!" thought the baronet, "this Irene, the witch, must be sent on a long journey, or she will investigate my little mysteries! Ah! Irene, the witch, leaves the room suddenly—what for?"

Irene did leave the room just as Lady Julia and Mrs. Hayland had exchanged polite salutations; then the eyes of Lady Julia fell upon the baronet.

A deep red instantly dyed her cheeks and brow, and her eyes sparkled angrily. But she remembered that a stranger was present, and so bowed coldly, turned to Mrs. Hayland, and said:

"Madam, I have heard so much of your skill that I have called to have you appoint a day when I may sit for my portrait—I am Lady Julia de Cressy."

"I am aware of that, Lady Julia," said Orania, much amazed because the baronet had recognised his wife—his lately restored wife—with a cold stare.

"I also wish to have a portrait painted of my son, Mr. Jerome de Cressy. My husband, with whom I see you are acquainted, is so fond of us that he wishes our portraits to be in his gallery as soon as possible."

"Aw, really!" said the baronet, rising and bowing. "Lady Julia should not expose my dotting fondness for her, and—ahem!—Mr. Jerome; but in truth, knowing how fond she is of me, Mrs. Hayland, I meant to give her an agreeable surprise with a gift of my portrait from you—admirable pencil to hang in her boudoir!"

So saying, Sir Jules smoothed his beard, and resumed his seat.

Lady Julia felt the covert sneer, and was about to make as clever a one, when Irene entered the studio with a faded silken scarf in her hand.

The Frenchwoman, ever on the alert, for years had been snatching at straws of hope floating upon what was a sea of mystery to her, and the first remark made by Sir Jules when he entered the studio that morning, in which he had involuntarily alluded to a great resemblance between Orania and Lady de Cressy, had fixed itself in her mind.

She had noticed, also, the slight agitation of Sir Jules when she had pronounced the name of "Clarence Vereton," and the same when she had uttered that of Mark Renfrew. Irene had instantly detected, too, the strong similitude of profile, feature, and form between the two ladies, and, having already set two traps and caught two stars from the baronet, she had quickly left the room to set one for Lady Julia and the baronet also.

She, therefore, on returning to the studio, advanced quickly to Sir Jules, but with her eyes sharply peering from their corners at Lady Julia, and, laying the scarf upon a table near him, said, in English:

"This is the scarf which the deranged lady who wrote 'Clarence Vereton' upon the wall left upon the banks of the Seine some twenty-two years ago, and there on the edge you may read in threads of gold—'Clarence to Julia.' See!"

Lady Julia grew pale as she heard the name "Clarence Vereton," and something like a shiver ran over her stately form as she gazed at the faded scarf.

But detecting the covert scrutiny of Irene instantly, she said, haughtily, and with cheeks red with sudden anger:

"How dare you stare—or rather leer at me in this manner?"

"Lady de Cressy," replied Irene, with deep respect, "I am seeking, and for years have been seeking—"

"What is it to me, woman, what and how long you have been seeking for anything?" demanded Lady de Cressy, arrogantly; "I have nothing in common with you, or people like you, French peasant!"

"Oh, Heaven!" thought Irene, crushed by this tempest of scorn and arrogance, and recoiling from the flashing eyes. "She cannot be the mother of my poor Orania. This is a tigress! My child is a dove!"

But Mrs. Hayland was not all a dove. She instantly advanced to the side of her faithful servant, with a grace that had no haughtiness or arrogance in it, but which breathed of firmness and noble pride, saying, coldly:

"Lady Julia has not heard and therefore cannot appreciate the devotion, the nobleness of Irene Dugarre, my adopted mother. Yes, she was a French peasant, but she is dearer to me, who may be less noble of birth—dearer than any titled lady in the world. She has just been relating to Sir Jules my painful history——"

"Aw, really!" ejaculated the baronet, with no desire to have the history touched upon. "A simple narrative, Lady Julia, with which neither you nor I have anything in common."

"Ah! Very well—then pray do not tell me anything of it. Yet, if Mrs. Hayland will come to Cressy Hall, unaccompanied by this favoured domestic, whose face and manners are repulsive to me, I shall be pleased to sit for my portrait."

Lady de Cressy desired to hear the story she affected to despise, for she saw that Sir Jules was opposed to it. But she desired to hear it alone.

"Irene Dugarre—my mother, Irene, accompanies me always, Lady Julia—even into the presence of royalty," replied Orania, firmly, and with a sudden stately haughtiness which startled Lady Julia into the very correct conviction that the child of genius, Orania Hayland, had moved more as an equal among lords and ladies in real life than she, Julia, the actress, had ever done amid the tinsel courts of the stage.

Lady Julia reddened, and was about to withdraw in feigned contempt, when her footman came in at the open door, holding in his hand a child's bracelet—the same Lady Julia had showed to the baronet on the preceding night.

"Your ladyship," said the footman, in the loud, pompous tone of his class, "dropped this valuable in the carriage."

It fell from his hand as he spoke, for the presence of Sir Jules startled him, and Irene picked it up.

Lady Julia extended her hand to receive the bracelet from Irene, at the same time saying to the footman:

"Begone! How dare you follow me into a house!"

"I thought it was very valuable, and——"

"Begone, I say!"

The footman hurried away. It was no longer Mrs. Julia Saunders that spoke to him. It was Lady de Cressy.

But Irene's sharp eyes had seen something in the bracelet that made her heart leap.

"See! *Mon Dieu!* Look, my child!" she said, not heeding the extended hand of Lady Julia, but giving the bracelet to Orania. "The fellow to the bracelet that was upon the wrist of your child when it fell into the sea! The——"

"Ah! such was clasped by me upon the wrist of my babe as I gave my poor darling to the careless nurse on the schooner!" cried Orania.

"Yes; and such was left upon your baby-arm, my child, by the crazy lady yonder in France. It was the fellow to this."

"It must have been—see! five little diamonds in a cross! and six emeralds! and here—here! Irene! Irene! see—the same letters—'C. V.'—engraved on the shield! Oh, is it the same? We had but one—the one you said the deranged lady left—it was on my child when it fell into the sea, Irene! Oh, Lady Julia, how came this bracelet in your possession?"

"I gave it to her," said Sir Jules, boldly.

Sir Jules did not lie in this. The bracelet was one of the pair "Clarence Vereton" had given, years before, to Julia.

"You! and how did you obtain it?" exclaimed Mrs. Hayland.

Then Sir Jules had, for he replied:

"It was given to me by the person I spoke of—he that said his name was Robert Hayland."

"My husband never saw the bracelet while I had it," remarked Mrs. Hayland.

"No," said Irene as her steady eye confronted that of the baronet. "The bracelet was kept in a box by me and my husband, after it was left upon the deserted babe, as I told you. We never spoke of it to Captain Robert. He never saw it. We only took it from the box after he disappeared—after the birth of his child, the child that was drowned on the way to Genoa. Even had it ever fallen into his hands he could not have suspected that it had ever belonged to his wife."

Sir Jules feared that in his bold lying he had over-shot the mark. He said, smiling:

"He did know that it once belonged to his wife—I mean the man who told me his name was Robert Hayland. Your husband I now know he was, Mrs. Hayland."

"Oh, Heaven! then you have met my husband? When and where? When?"

"Wait," said Irene, calmly. "Sir Jules, if Captain Robert was the man in your mind, and had known that the bracelet was once his wife's, he would never have given it to you, or to any one, while his hand had strength to keep it near his heart."

Sir Jules shrugged his shoulders, smiled, and replied:

"He was this lady's husband. He knew that the bracelet had belonged to his wife. He knew that his wife had borne him a child. He knew that the child was drowned at sea. He told me all this, and he did not give me the bracelet while his hand had strength to keep it near his heart. When I took it from his hand, as he had asked me to do, he was dead!"

The bracelet fell from Orania's hand as she heard these last cruel, false, heart-crushing words, and with a sharp scream of agony she cried:

"He is dead! My husband is dead! My Robert!" and sank fainting into the arms of the appalled Irene Dugarre.

(To be continued.)

A TIGER STORY.—The following story is told in a letter from New Goa:—"In the province of Salceto is a village named Cunoolin, where the Marquis of Fronteira, of Portugal, holds an extensive landed property, and it is bounded on two sides by thickly-wooded hills whereon tigers, leopards, jackals, wolves, hyenas, and other wild beasts reign supreme. One evening, not long since, a full-grown tiger entered the little village at the foot of the hill, and without ceremony walked into a poor man's cottage, at the hour all the members of the family happened to be absent at their daily vocations in the field, with the exception of a very old woman. She, poor creature, no sooner realised the situation than she screamed lustily, but not lustily enough to drive the beast away from the place. The poor woman next tried to effect her escape from the cottage, but infirmity proved a bar to her realising her wishes in this respect. The bloodthirsty animal, therefore, leisurely approached and made short work of his victim. The tiger, who had entered the cottage by the front door, now quietly walked through, out by the back door which opened into one of the most frequented lanes of the village.

There he perceived, gathered together, a score or so of men, of all ages, some with firearms in their hands, others with swords and sharp chaff-cutters, but the majority thereof with thick, heavy cudgels, and himself the subject of general observation and remark. To clear a road for himself, the tiger sprang and caught one of the cudgel-men by the throat. Short had been the cudgel-man's shrift had not a valiant Musselman, perched on the roof of the old woman's cottage, sent a bullet through the tiger's right thigh. This rendered the beast furious, and, perceiving the man from whom he had received such unkindly treatment, he, with a tremendous roar, sprang at one bound on the housetop beside the Musselman, who dropped his gun and shrieked for aid. The tiger seized him, with one bound descended with him in his jaws, and speedily made an end of him. The friends of the deceased, by this time also furious, and bent upon vengeance, with butt-ends, swords, cudgels, and stones, brought the beast to the ground, and so belaboured him that, with a mighty howl, he expired.

THE DIAMOND MERCHANT

CHAPTER VI.

Cowards are cruel, but the brave
Love mercy, and delight to save. Gay.

SIR EDRÉD, faint and sick at heart, trembling in every joint, could but stare at the torn veil, or, rather, at the torn name, and groan.

His wife, beautiful, gentle, and loving, was dearer to him than his life, and the shock of this unexpectedly found proof of her fate for a moment nearly burst both heart and brain with agony.

"Louise! my wife! poor Louise!"

The words bubbled from his pale lips in sobbing gasps.

"Lost! my Louise, my dear wife, in the grasp of the Black Riders! And my brave, noble boy! Ernest! Oh, Heaven! Louise! my gentle wife! Ernest, my son!"

Down upon the dew-wet sward he sank. A man of deep passions usually well controlled, when he did give way he was terrible in venting his emotions. For several minutes he lay upon his breast, sobbing, groaning, pressing that torn relic to his lips, to his eyes, to his heart, and gasping the words again and again:

"Louise! Wife!"

But the reaction came, like the sweep of the tempest, through a forest.

He sprang to his feet, every muscle rigid with rage, the rage of a strong man mad for revenge.

It was well for Sir Edred that this reaction seized upon him at the moment it did. Had he remained a moment longer, blind and deaf to all except his grief, he perhaps had never risen again.

Even as he first stared at that torn name, three pairs of fierce and savage eyes were watching his movements from the edge of the enclosure. Three rovers of the forest, who had been strolling about since dawn, seeking for him, as scores of others like them were, in other parts of the great forest, saw him as he sprang from his horse—saw him examine the traces of those who had been there the day before—saw him pick up the torn veil, gaze at it, and then sink down, groaning, with his face to the earth.

Seeing this, the three sprang from their leafy covert, and hastened towards him—three tall, stout fellows, armed to the teeth, and used to hand-to-hand combat—desperate, ill-favoured ruffians, who never hesitated to slay a man to rob him even of a few coins—fellows whose daggers were yet moist with the heart's blood of that unfortunate trader of Antwerp of whom mention was made in the letter dispatched from Zweibrücken by "Vigilance."

They moved slowly towards their prostrate and groaning victim, knowing him to be the rich diamond merchant Sir Edred Van De Veer. The swift-footed wretch Rudolph Schwartz, had aroused the vigilance of the Black Riders, soon after we saw him disappear in the ravine near the "Iron Hand" inn. All night the forest had been alive with couriers and signals, giving this exciting news from point to point:

"The diamond merchant we expected is lost in the forest! He rides a gray horse, and wears a scarlet belt. Take him, dead or alive!"

Thus these three marauders, recognising the horse and the scarlet belt, knew that the man before them was that eagerly coveted prize the diamond merchant; a man whose pockets, purse, and garments might be lined and stuffed with jewels and gold; a man for whose capture, dead or alive, their chief, their great head, though seldom seen in the forest, had offered a thousand broad pieces of gold.

Yes, a thousand broad pieces of gold, in addition to a double share of what spoil might be gathered

from the feat, had been offered to the Black Riders of the Giant Forest for the capture, dead or alive, of Sir Edred Van De Veer, by the father of that cousin of the Prince of Zurichbold who had hurled a curse upon the marriage of the prince and princess.

So there was a mystery that linked together the lives of Euglace, Prince of Zurichbold, Sir Edred Van De Veer, the diamond merchant, and the secret chief of the Black Riders of the Giant Forest; and our story is written to reveal this mystery.

The three marauders now rushing upon Sir Edred knew nothing of this mystery, and would have cared little had they known it. Their only object was the glittering prize they believed they held within their grasp.

With enormous bounds they reached their intended prey. Skilled in their terrible calling, their approach was as noiseless as it was swift. With fierce faces all adams, and sharp, long-handled axes upraised each on fire in his heart to strike the first blow, they had sprung from the dense foliage, moving in the rear of Sir Edred as he lay upon his breast.

But they were of unequal speed. Each a powerful, agile man, but each different from the other in strength and fleetness.

The foremost of the three was within ten feet of Sir Edred when the latter, furiously mad with desire to find an enemy, to confront a Black Rider, but not dreaming any were so near, sprang to his feet, with the glare of wished-for battle in his face, and his good drawn blade in his hand.

Down came the long-handled axe, too suddenly for Sir Edred to parry the blow, but striking only his broad, well-tempered breastplate, with a clash and clang that told of the force with which the stroke was delivered, and the rock-like strength of the man who received it.

Ninety-nine men in a hundred would have been hurled to the earth by that furious stroke, even had they been the stoutest carls of the forest; but it seemed scarcely to do more than jar the erect, sinewy frame of the diamond merchant. And while the clang of the steel still resounded in the ears of the marauder, the sword of Sir Edred flashed out towards him like the glare of lightning, and swept his head clean from his shoulders.

It was all done in half a breath. The stroke of the axe, the flash back of the sword, and the head of the marauder went spinning and spirting blood as it sprang forward from his shoulders.

Rudolph Schwartz had told no idle story when he said to Ulgitha at the inn, speaking of Sir Edred:

"He has in his single arm the strength of three strong men, and there's no sword-play in all Germany that can keep a blade in hand against him, nor a tumbler on the green so active."

The two comrades of the foremost were but a few paces in his rear when they saw that terrible sword flash out, and the head smitten off. They were almost side by side, bounding forward, one not more than a pace in the rear of the other, when Sir Edred, with a grim smile, planted his right foot upon the back of the headless corpse, sprang over it like an aroused tiger that has tasted blood and is rapacious for more—sprang over it, high in the air—and, parrying the sweeping stroke of the nearer man, dealt the other a backward thrust in the throat, that sent him backward to the earth, choking with his own life-stream as it gushed in torrents from the severed arteries.

The surviving marauder, whose downward blow had been turned aside, was carried forward by the force of his attack, and, stumbling over the headless body, fell upon his knees and hands.

The fellow had almost regained his feet, when the sword of Sir Edred made an end of him at a blow.

Two heads, severed from the bodies that a moment before had borne them erect and full of villany, now lay near each other.

A swift glance around assured Sir Edred that these three were all he had had to fear. The stout merchant knight was scarcely flushed from so brief a combat. His life of peril had been preserved through a hundred encounters, many far more furious than this.

"I have done wrong in my fury," he thought. "I have made a great mistake. I should have spared one, to question him of the fate of my wife and son. But it is too late now. No speech can ever move any of these fierce lips again."

A loud groan, a groan that was in truth like the scream of a dying man, or a man in fearful pain, reached his ear as he was gazing upon the dead.

He started in alarm, lest he was again to be attacked, and gazed about him.

His horse, frightened by the recent affray, was galloping hero and there about the forest; but as Sir Edred looked towards him, the animal halted suddenly, and, with ears thrown forward and neck stretched out, seemed staring at a certain spot.

Again that dismal cry, the cry of a man or a wo-

man in great pain, and this time framed in these words:

"Pity! Help! Help!"

Whether the cry of man or woman, so shrill, yet hoarse and tortured it was, Sir Edred could not divine, and, sword in hand, he ran towards that quarter to which the attention of his horse seemed directed.

Not until he had passed by the trembling animal, and pushed his way through a dense mass of young trees and high undergrowth, did Sir Edred learn the cause of that mournful, dismal wailing.

Within a small open space, not many paces from the edge of the enclosure, was a single lofty tree, and, bound with his breast to this tree, naked, and bruised from shoulder to heel, was a man half dead.

With cords tied to his wrists and ankles so that his naked limbs were tightly drawn against the rugged, lacerating bark, was this wretched man bound, with his arms and legs spread, as if embracing the trunk.

"Help! Free me from this torture—or kill me!" groaned this man as he heard the approach of Sir Edred, and striving to turn his ghastly face towards him.

With an exclamation of horror and pity the merchant cut the cruel cords, and held the fainting, feeble, battered form in his arms.

"Down! let me lie down!" gasped the man, shivering as if the agony of death was upon him.

Sir Edred gently laid him down upon a heap of leaves.

"Water! give me water! for Heaven's sake give me water!" muttered the parched and swollen lips.

"Water! I know not where to find it," said Sir Edred. "But here is wine in this leathern flask."

The man drank eagerly, ravenously, as the diamond merchant held the flask to his dry lips.

"Who are you, sir?" demanded Sir Edred. "No—you must wait before you drink more. Who are you?"

"A wretch—most justly punished. Get you gone from the forest, or you are a dead man; for you are not of them," said the man, staring at the merchant.

"Not of them! What mean you?"

"You are not one of the Black Riders."

"Thank Heaven, I am not!" ejaculated Sir Edred, recollecting a pace as he added, quickly, "are you?"

"I was, woe is mine! I was, and this is my end! My name is Anselm Britzo, of Sparburg, and I was in the pay of the Black Riders—"

"What name? what name?" cried Sir Edred.

"Anselm Britzo."

"By profession?"

"A guide, a courier."

Sir Edred uttered a loud cry of heart pain, and snatching from his bosom a wallet, and from the wallet a letter, he flashed a wild and terrified glance over its contents, seeking for something he feared to find.

The letter was from his wife—the letter that had been so tardy on its way to him, and the reception of which had hurried his departure from Zweibrücken.

Flashing his eyes wildly over it now, he found these words:

"I have already engaged the services of a guide, or courier, he calls himself, and his name is Anselm Britzo. The man seems honest, and is so reputed."

Having read these words, the diamond merchant groaned again, and stared at the naked, bruised wretch lying on the wet leaves.

"Tell me," burst from his lips, in a hoarse whisper, for his emotion denied him louder speech, "tell me why I find you thus!"

"I am an agent of the association known as the Black Riders," was the faint and yet distinct reply. "I had promised to guide into their hands a traveller from whom they would gain great booty. I did so, but the Riders found little to reward them; and as their expectations had been great, they wreaked their rage upon me, saying that I had warned the traveller to leave her wealth at Sparburg."

"The traveller was a woman?"

"Yes, sir."

"A lady? with two female attendants? and the lady's son, a lad named Ernest Van De Veer? and the lady was the wife of the diamond merchant, Sir Edred Van De Veer?"

These questions burst from the merchant's lips in a volley, and as he uttered them he drew nearer to the guide, with the fierce light of wrath blazing over all his face.

"Yes, my master," gasped the prostrate wretch, appalled by the glaring eyes of the speaker.

"And you, their trusted guide, betrayed them to the Riders?"

"Heaven forgive me, I did!—and am I not justly punished?"

"Wretch! why did my hand ease your tortures? Any hand but mine should have done that!" cried the merchant, glaring at the man. "Do you know

who I am? I am Sir Edred Van De Veer! I am the husband of the woman—the father of the boy, you betrayed! Where are they? What was done to them? Traitor! hound of the devil! tell me of the fate of my wife and son!"

In his boiling rage and despair the merchant placed his heel upon the breast of the battered wretch, and the point of his sword at the man's throat.

"I deserve death," broke in a great gasp from the purple lips of the guide as his eyes gazed wildly up at the terrific wrath lowering upon him. "Slay me! They have already beaten my flesh to a pulp—my bones are a torture to me. Yet, I would I could live to be revenged—to avenge myself!"

"My wife—my son? tell me of them!"

"The Riders led them and me to the open space not far from this—it is called the Riders' Court. It was soon discovered that the travellers had little worth the taking, except their horses; even their luggage was light and of little worth, nothing but garments of females. No doubt the lady suspected treachery, or feared that any show of wealth might lead an attack towards herself and companions. Her own garments were coarse and plain; only the boy wore such material as the child of a rich man might wear. An examination speedily told the Riders that little booty was to be had, and then they seized upon me, and accused me of having betrayed their faith in me. They demanded the jewels I had spoken of, and beat me down with the butts of their spears—"

"But speak not of what they did to you," interrupted the impatient merchant. "What did they with my wife and son?"

"That I know not, noble sir. I was stripped and dragged away, then bound as you found me, and beaten until I became senseless."

"Great Heaven! and you can tell me nothing of the fate of my wife and son?"

"Nothing, for I was half dead when the Riders dragged me from the enclosure. When I regained my senses I was alone—as you found me—and night was upon all. Heaven forgive me! I am most justly punished!"

"Can you tell me nothing?" cried the merchant;

"As I was struck down I heard voices shouting: 'Draw lots for the women.'"

Hearing this the unhappy merchant staggered as if struck, reeled to a tree, clung to its trunk, and glared at the guide with a wild look of horror in his fixed stare.

"Draw lots for the women!" he muttered, repeating the terrible words again and again. "Poor Louise, poor Louise! ay, and the others—her two attendants—poor things, poor creatures! Oh, Heaven, what a fate! And my boy! what of him? Did they spare him, or did they take his young life, in their rage?"

A thought of the immense wealth in jewels he had left in his wife's charge flashed into his tortured brain but for an instant, and passed away as suddenly. He cared not a rush for the loss of that wealth, if lost it was, as his heart writhed and throbbed madly in its fear for the welfare of wife and son.

"My lord," said the guide, giving the merchant that title involuntarily, and raising his bruised frame upon one elbow as he spoke, "there may be a hope that the Riders were merciful."

"Ha! a hope!" exclaimed the merchant, catching at the word, and approaching the guide eagerly. "A hope! Man, I did intend to bind you again to that tree, and leave you to die as I found you; but give me even a hope, and count me a friend. What is this hope?"

"The chief of the party into whose power Lady Van De Veer fell," replied the guide, "is accounted of a more merciful and generous nature than any of them. It may be—as it has been with him ere now—that he has set Lady Van De Veer at liberty. Nay, he may have given her an escort back to the highway. I speak not of what he may have done with the two attendants, but if I mistake not, Lady Van De Veer was scarcely in proper condition to travel. He must have seen that, and taken pity upon her condition."

"Heaven grant it! Your words give me hope—" began the merchant; but just at that instant the guide cried out:

"Oh, Jezu! I am dying! Oh, this pain! Fly, my lord—fly! each instant here increases your danger—fly!"

The man, in his sudden spasm of pain, writhed his limbs, beat the leaves about him with his swollen fists, groaned, and set his teeth.

"How can I leave the forest? How find the highway?" cried Sir Edred, bending over him.

The guide struggled to reply. His voice was stifled in his throat. He evidently understood the merchant's situation, and strove to inform him.

But only husky, inarticulate sounds escaped his lips. He tried to point in some particular direction, but his feeble arm swung here and there for a moment and then fell heavily to his side.

A sound like the blast of a hunter's horn struck upon the ears of the diamond merchant. The wretched guide heard that sound also in the distance.

With a mighty effort, the guide spoke clearly:

"The rally-note of the Riders! They will soon be here! Fly, Sir Edred—to the east! the highway is there!—to the eastward—the path by the dead pine—the Riders' Court—the dead pine, remember—the—the—!"

A ghastly expression seized upon his face, his eyes seemed glazing in the fixed stare of death rapidly approaching.

Again the distant note of the hunter's horn, but in a different quarter from that whence Sir Edred had just heard it. It then came from the north. He heard it now as from the south. Horn was answering horn; signal was replying to signal. The lines of those who were hunting him down were being drawn about him.

A glance at the guide. He lay like a dead man.

"He is dead!" thought Sir Edred. "Yet it may be but a swoon. Good for evil—good for evil," he added as he thrust his leathern flask under a heap of leaves upon which the right hand of the guide rested.

He turned then to hurry to the spot where he had left his horse. Again the sound of a hunter's horn, and he knew that none except the Black Riders blew that peculiar blast.

Yet he paused, and, taking from the pouch he wore at his belt a fragment of bread and a handful of preserved meat, he thrust them under the leaves where he had hidden the flask. Why he did this he never knew. A belief that the treacherous guide was not dead was in his mind, and with it a presentiment that he and that man were to meet again. He had no other reason for leaving the provision there. He was scarcely aware that he did so.

But the good and generous deed was done, and Sir Edred bounded away to seek safety in the speed of his horse.

CHAPTER VII.

Robbers alone, with more than savage rage,
Unnatural war with brother robbers wage.

Churcill.

THE horse of the diamond merchant, refreshed by the oats he had found scattered here and there in the Riders' Court, was moving about quietly when his master ran towards him.

The animal, having been in the service of the Riders, was accustomed to such rapid approaches, and, instead of springing away, trotted rapidly to meet Sir Edred, with a low whinny of pleasure, and a snort which might well have been construed thus:

"Here I am, at your service. I see there is fast riding to be done!"

The diamond merchant was in the saddle at a single bound, the sharp sound of a distant horn, to which others replied, ringing in his ears, and the last words of the guide flashed across his mind:

"The east—the dead pine!" he thought as he cast an inquiring glance to the east side of the enclosure. "Ah—there is a dead pine! the high road and safety lie in that direction."

Tall and white, stripped of its bark by age and storms, the only one of its species round the great forest enclosure, a solitary gigantic pine was an object readily seen, and Sir Edred spurred his horse towards it.

He had already observed that many paths from the surrounding forest opened into the space called the Riders' court, and as he neared the pine he was not surprised to see that one of the many paths from the woods ended there at the base of the tree.

Sir Edred had nearly reached this opening when he suddenly checked his horse and sprang to the ground. We have said that he was not inexperienced in woodcraft. A glance at the narrow entrance from the woods at the base of the pine had told him that the path had not been recently used. It was plain that much rain had fallen since any foot of man or beast had trodden it.

He knew that the Riders from various quarters of the forest were approaching their rendezvous in the enclosure. The horns he had heard had warned him of that danger, and so had the last words of the guide. They would soon be there, and the bodies of the three dead marauders would inform them of his recent presence. Close and immediate search for him would be made, and it was important to delay the accuracy of that search as long as possible. Prints of his horse's hoofs upon the dead and damp leaves at the mouth of the path would plainly point out the way he had taken.

As he sprang to the ground he tore his large, thick cloak into four pieces. With these he muffled the hoofs of his steed. To this the horse made not the slightest resistance.

"Ha!" thought Sir Edred as he reigned his bridle and gently led his horse into the path, not caring to increase the pressure upon the leaves by the addition of his weight in the saddle, "it is very plain, my four-footed friend, that this is not by any means the first time your feet have been muffled."

He led him several rods along the path, glancing keenly at the ground he had gone over as he did so, and seeing with satisfaction that no impression of the hoofs remained to betray the way he had taken. Then, vaulting into the saddle, he quickened his progress, but not daring to put his horse to any great speed until the sound of a trumpet, loud and sharp, and as he judged within the enclosure he had quitted, fell upon his ear.

"Some of them have arrived at the Riders' Court, and have seen what is there!" he thought as he struck his spurs deep into his horse's flanks. "Now let me leave danger behind me while I can."

Leaving Sir Edred to pursue his flight along a narrow and winding path, of which he knew absolutely nothing, we will return to the Riders' Court, as the guide had termed that forest-embayed enclosure which the diamond merchant had just quitted.

Sir Edred had not been gone twenty minutes when a party of eight men rode leisurely into the court. All were well mounted; but two of them, by their air, their superior horses and appointments, and the respect paid to them by the others, were evidently the chiefs of the party.

These two rode side by side in advance of the others, and, after advancing a few paces into the enclosure halted. Their six followers did likewise, and all began to gaze about them.

The elder of the two chiefs was a man fully sixty years old, thin in face and form, with harsh, rugged features that seemed to have become a mass of hardened muscles beneath a skin as dark as a mulatto's, and as dry as parchment. A heavy white moustache, and a snow-white, sharp-pointed beard by their contrast with the dark complexion made it appear darker; while the cotton-floss whiteness of his heavy beetling eyebrows added a darker shade to the small, keen, deep-set eyes under them.

Grim and strong, with sinews of steel, which age seemed only to have hardened, this man, Hermann Von Arden, Baron of Zweibrudden, secret head and chief of that powerful organisation known throughout that part of Germany as the Black Riders of the Giant Forest, sat erect and firm in his saddle—cruel, cunning, audacious, and unscrupulous.

He was clad in black, with a long cloak of green woollen stuff hanging from his shoulders. He carried no visible weapons, except the long, straight sword at his left side, and a dagger whose jewelled hilt peeped from the breast of his doublet. Under his garments he wore chain armour.

His companion was clad in the same manner, but was a man of middle age, perhaps not more than thirty-five, though looking much older. Tall and stout in frame, with features originally handsome, but now dark, sinister, and fierce in expression.

This latter was Senlis Von Arden, Baron of Karlwold, son of Baron Hermann of Zweibrudden, and cousin of Eustace of Zurichbold. Heirs failing the house of Eustace, Altenberg, the principality of Zurichbold, would fall first to Baron Hermann, and after him to Baron Senlis.

"Ay, this is the spot, Senlis," said Baron Hermann as they halted. "I have not seen it for twice ten years; but it has not changed. I never expected to ride within it again, nor would I now be here but for the shrewd flight of that diamond merchant."

"And a rough ride have we had of it from Castle Zweibrudden to be here so soon," replied Baron Senlis. "The man must carry a king's ransom with him to stir you to such eagerness for his capture. When the word was brought to us that the fellow had made a midnight fitting from the town, I said, 'Leave him to Sir Fritz and the Riders. Sir Fritz is on the alert.'—There, you hear the signals?"

"Yes, I hear them," replied the old baron, drily. "Sir Fritz has doubtless received my message, and ordered a gathering of his strolling bands to meet me here. I hope to hear that the diamond merchant is captured, or dead. Those horns sound as if those who blew them were coming very slowly. Bartolph," he added, addressing one of his followers, "sound Baron Hermann's call, that it may be known I am here."

The attendant blew that loud and keen trumpet blast which caused Sir Edred to ply his spurs in the lonely path.

At the same moment the keen eyes of the old baron, roving here and there over the great space, caught sight of several recumbent objects at the far end of the enclosure.

"Ho! there are three fellows asleep at the other end. Let us ride over to them."

A few moments after saw the party gathered around those who had died by Sir Edred's sword.

"My faith!" exclaimed the old baron, with a harsh laugh, not suspecting whose deed it was, "they are dead! All Riders too, by their garb! Some forest justice has been done here this morning. The Riders' Court it was ever called, and here all traitors and culprits were judged and punished. It is plain Sir Fritz keeps up the customs and laws of the association. Years ago, Senlis, when I used to delight in sharing the life and sports of the Riders, many a stout fellow have I seen shortened by the head hereabouts, or hanged to the trees, or flogged half-dead, for real or suspected treachery. Heaven's life! it mattered little whether a man were guilty or not—we used to punish on suspicion. And a very good theory it was."

"And you think these three have fallen by command of Sir Fritz?" asked the younger baron as he gazed sharply about.

"By his command, or the laws of the bands—No! that cannot be! There are plain signs of a fight here. There lie their axes—one poor fellow still clings to his. Besides, had they been slain by the Riders—But here come those who may tell us."

As Baron Hermann spoke, a man, mounted on a powerful black horse, and followed by several other Riders, entered the court by one of the many half-hidden entrances, and galloped swiftly towards the two barons. This new-comer and his followers had scarcely made their appearance when small bodies of men, some mounted and some on foot, emerged from different quarters of the dense forest, which on every side enclosed the Riders' court.

"The diamond merchant must indeed be an important personage, since your orders appear to have called together all the strength of Fritz's Riders for his capture," remarked Baron Senlis, with a half-sneer, glancing towards the strong force rapidly gathering. "Why, five years ago, when the merchant passed near the Riders' domains, but a single party of half-a-dozen was detailed for his capture. He must have marvellously increased in importance since that time."

"In truth he has. Then, for all I knew, he was simply Edred Van De Veer, a diamond merchant."

"And what more is he now?"

"I suppose you may as well be told now as hereafter," replied Baron Hermann. "In fact, only a few days before he departed from Zweibrücken I made a discovery—that which I now whisper to you."

So saying, Baron Hermann leaned far from his saddle—Baron Senlis also inclining his head towards his father's lips—and rapidly communicated some information in a tone too guarded to reach the ears of any of their attendants had the words been spoken aloud.

Indeed, before whispering in the ear of his son, the old baron made a gesture which caused their six attendants to fall back hastily several paces.

"It cannot be!" exclaimed Baron Senlis, his dark face growing pale.

"It is true; but speak not so loud. Bury the secret in your own brain."

"And he—the diamond merchant? Does he know this secret?" asked Senlis.

"No; nor has he a suspicion of the truth. But we must say no more of this now," replied Baron Hermann, and at that moment a cloud of Riders swept around them.

There were more than five hundred then within the enclosure, and others were still riding in—all bronzed and fierce-faced men, variously armed and mounted, and many on foot, their numbers momentarily increasing, proving the formidable strength of the lawless association of the Black Riders, an association originated many years before by Baron Hermann, of whom and of whose dark antecedents we shall speak hereafter.

Only in times of peace could the association number its members by thousands. When war was waged by the rival chieftains of the great German empire the greater part of its bands were wont to take regular, though temporary service in their armies.

During the century in which our story is laid a general police was not only unknown but even unthought of. Each noble of any eminence exercised such power as he dared or was able to wield. The forests, moors, and mountains of nearly all of Central Europe swarmed with plunderers and desperadoes of every kind. The nobles themselves were often audacious robbers, even on the highway; and for generations the various emperors of Germany had rarely found time or power to spare to crush the evil and lawless societies which were continually springing up.

The great tract of country known by the name of the Giant Forest was a part of the domains belonging to the principality of Zurichbold, or generally so supposed, though the question had been for three generations mooted whether the mighty forest, with its hills, valleys, mountains, fields, and rivers, be-

longed to the heirs of Zurichbold, to the Imperial throne, or to the Von Ardens.

Being thus in the rude Chancery of the times, with no fully established owner, the Giant Forest became the resort, the abode, and in fact the territory of many pillaging bands of different classes of banditti, made up of adventurers, mercenaries, and disbanded soldiers of many nations. Among them were revolted serfs and peasants, who, unable to endure the tyranny of their lords, had sought refuge and obtained lawless liberty in the forest. It was true that among their robber leaders were men of knightly and noble birth, but such were their leaders only because of their superior strength and education, though even among these banditti, the characteristic of the day, servility to high birth, was not unmarked.

At the date of our story the empire was comparatively at peace, as regards foreign foes; and their pay from the emperor ceasing on expiration of active service, hundreds of wild spirits, detesting the tame labours of town or field, had adopted for the time the banditti life of the Black Riders.

He who had first entered the enclosure after the party of Baron Hermann was evidently the chief of all those swarming in from the forest, for, perceiving that the barons and their party were about to be crowded upon too closely, he raised himself in his stirrups, and pointing towards the centre of the court, shouted, in a clear and powerful voice: "Form there, Riders!" adding some other rapidly spoken words to those near him, which caused for a moment a babel of confusion amid his tumultuous followers, but soon left him entirely alone with the two barons and their six attendants.

At the same time the centre of the enclosure began to present the appearance of a strong body of disciplined and undisciplined troops forming for review.

This leader, whose power over the fierce forest banditti was thus significantly displayed, was he of whom the two barons had spoken under the name of Sir Fritz—a man of short stature, powerfully framed, perhaps not more than thirty-three or thirty-five years of age, with a pair of sharp gray eyes flashing from a dark, resolute face.

He had saluted the barons with a slight inclination of the head before giving to the Riders the orders of which we have just spoken; but on being left alone with them, addressed Baron Hermann in a cold, haughty tone, while his eyes glanced inquiringly at the three dead bodies near:

"I am pleased to meet Baron Hermann as my superior here and elsewhere, but unless these three met their death in an attack upon you, Baron of Zweibrücken, their fate should have rested in my hands. No one of ours can be put to death in the forest without my consent."

"This tone to me, Fritz Alden!" exclaimed the old baron, amazed and plainly enraged.

"Why not, my lord, when I see almost under your horse's hoofs three of my own body-guard?" replied the other, sternly, and about to say more, when Baron Senlis broke in with:

"His body-guard! My life! how we are grown since we received our commission of recruiting-officer for the bands of Zweibrücken! His body-guard! He has forgotten that he once carried horses in the stables of Hermann of Zweibrücken!"

"Peace!" cried the old baron, turning upon his son fiercely, and adding in a tone heard only by him, "Be wary! I fear we have unwittingly put our hands into a hornet's nest."

Then, turning to the Black Rider, he said:

"Sir Fritz, of these three dead men we know nothing. We have just arrived within the court, after four days' swift riding from Zweibrücken Castle, by the Arnault road, to reach your presence ere the diamond merchant, of whom I wrote, should slip through. At midnight last night we left the highway near Arnault with fresh horses, and arrived here but a few minutes before you, having sent before us from Zweibrücken a message to you to meet us here with a good force—I did not expect to meet an army," he said, sharply, glancing towards the still-gathering bands as they hurried to the centre of the enclosure, where a tall staff, with a black and red banner fluttering from it, was planted. "I expected and wished only to meet you and a few of your most active subordinates to take instant action for the capture of Edred Van De Veer."

"And I had heard," said Fritz Alden, with a grim smile, "that you, who, secure in your stronghold of Zweibrücken, receive the lion's share of all the spoils taken by us of the forest, intend to remove me from the command of the Riders and give it to your son, Baron Senlis."

"And I seek no such exalted station," remarked Senlis, with a sneer. "My fortunes have not yet driven me to be a Black Rider."

"The fortunes of the Black Riders, shared liberally with your father, who was once as desperate in purse and reputation as any ragged back you may see

near that banner, support you in your present station," retorted Sir Fritz, with a sneer as bitter as that with which he had been addressed. "You are no less a Black Rider than I am, with this difference, Baron Senlis—I peril my life for the spoil which you share without doing anything towards acquiring it. Come, you need not lay your hands on your swords, my lords. We are in the Giant Forest, and I am chief here. I received Baron Hermann's order to meet him here to-day. You see I have obeyed. But I have done so to tell him that if he, or you, or any one else, is to benefit hereafter by the spoils we take, a share in the danger and in the life we lead must constitute his right. We pay tribute no more to the Barony of Zweibrücken."

"So be it," said the old baron, quickly, and checking with a glance the intended fierce reply of his son. "Capture for me my diamond merchant, and pay tribute as you please hereafter. But remember that in losing me as your real chief you lose a powerful ally also. But we will arrange all this hereafter. At present we must see to the diamond merchant."

"I must inform you, barons, that you are not to leave the forest until this matter of tribute is fully settled," said Sir Fritz, coldly.

"By which you mean," remarked Baron Senlis, "we are your captives."

"That is as you please to regard it, my lord. We will now speak of the diamond merchant."

"A nice business you have made of it," whispered Baron Senlis to his father. "I warned you not to trust yourself in his reach, and I was a fool to venture with you."

"It is well as it is," replied the old baron. "It is time that these rough fellows should know there is a greater power than this puffed-up knave, who is aiming to make a barony for himself out of the disputed territory of the Giant Forest. Be patient. At present we must look to the diamond merchant. So fair a chance for his capture and killing," he added, setting his teeth hard, "may never occur again. Well, Sir Fritz, what news of the merchant? Are your scouts and spies on the watch?"

"You are very eager for the capture of that man, baron," replied the Black Rider, who had dismounted while the others whispered the above, and who had narrowly examined the ground near the three dead marauders.

"Ay, the fellow carries immense wealth in diamonds with him," said the old baron, carelessly.

"But that can no longer be of interest to you, my lord," said Sir Fritz, as carelessly, "since we are to keep all we get hereafter."

"Not so, since it was I who put you on the alert. He who starts the game should share equally with him who strikes it down. Not a man in all that array will say nay to that, Sir Fritz."

"Not a man there that will not say we have already paid Baron Hermann thrice too much. So as far as you are interested, what if the diamond merchant escape, or be slain?"

"Can it be that this man has penetrated the secret also?" thought the two barons as they exchanged glances, each reading the other's thought.

"I have a bitter personal enmity towards Edred Van De Veer," said the old baron, boldly.

"So I imagined, my lord, when I heard that you had offered so great a reward for his capture. Well, the diamond merchant is now in the forest."

"Ha! then he is taken!" exclaimed both barons.

"Would you have him dead, or alive?" demanded the Rider, with his glittering gray eyes fixed keenly on the old baron's face.

"Dead," said Baron Senlis, less guarded than his father.

"You may see some of his work before you," remarked Sir Fritz, gravely, and sweeping his hand towards the dead marauders.

"His work! Is that his work? He has been here!" exclaimed Baron Hermann, wildly.

"He was before the 'Iron Hand' inn just at sunset yesterday, my lord. Rudolph Schwartz saw him and spoke with him. He is now somewhere within the forest."

"At liberty? Escaping?"

"It may be that he has by this time fallen into the hands of some of our strolling bands, my lord. It may be that he is riding or wandering about, seeking to find the highway. Certainly he has been here. Who else could have slain these three? Here is a shroud of green velvet, cut or torn off by the blow of some weapon—doubtless a blow from this axe, as I see its edge is turned and blunted, as if it had struck a breastplate of steel or a steel cap; glancing from whatever it struck, it tore off this shroud of green velvet, and Schwartz said the merchant wore a loose vest of such stuff. I have no doubt he has been here, nor—"

"But, life of man!" interrupted the old baron, angrily, "he cannot have been long gone, for the bodies of these men are yet warm."

In his eager anxiety the speaker had leaped from his saddle and thrust his hand, ungloved, within the doublets of the dead men.

"Not an hour has passed since he fought here," replied Sir Fritz, springing into his saddle. "But his fate is sealed. He cannot escape from this forest without a guide, and, of course, he has none. Come with me, gentlemen, and you shall see the pursuit, or rather the search set in motion."

He galloped away towards the centre of the enclosure, where the red and black banner was lazily fluttering in the morning air over the heads of fully a thousand men who had assembled there at his command.

The two barons moved slowly after him, whispering, in order that their six attendants, who also followed wonderingly, should not hear their words.

But before they arrived near the banner Sir Fritz had given several rapid orders, a great shout had roared from the throats of a thousand men in reply, the serried as well as the disorderly ranks broke into a hundred separate bands, and each band, under its leader, was dashing from the field towards the encircling forest to seek for the escaping diamond merchant.

(To be continued.)

LEIGHTON HALL.

CHAPTER XXXIV.

ROY was not at home when Georgie came with the news of Edna's intended absence from the hall, and, when he heard it from his mother, he evinced more dissatisfaction even than she had done, and finally, after lunch, drove to John Heyford's house, determined to bring Edna back.

She was surprised and glad to see him; there was a deep flush on her cheek, and a soft light in her brown eyes, which, in spite of her worn, tired look, made her very beautiful, as she stood, with her hand in his in the reception-room, listening to his anxious inquiries as to how she had passed the night; after which he announced his intention of taking her home with him.

"Oh, I cannot go," she said. "I cannot leave Annie now. You don't know how ill she is, or you would not ask it."

"But surely there are others whose duty it is more than yours to forego their pleasure," Roy rejoined.

And Edna answered:

"She has no relations except Mr. Heyford and Miss Burton, and she, you know, cannot be here; and, as I will not leave Maude alone, I must stay. I am sorry, for I did anticipate the party with pleasure; but I think I am doing right."

Roy thought so too, and involuntarily pressed the hand which Edna had all the time been quietly trying to withdraw from his grasp. He did not urge her any farther, nor ask to see Annie. He was not more specially interested in the latter than he would have been in any sick person; and just at that particular time he felt her to be rather a trouble, and wondered why she need have been ill just then, when he wanted Miss Overton so much at home.

"Don't say anything to alarm Miss Burton, please," Edna said to him as he was about to leave. "We know she cannot come now, but to-morrow morning we shall expect her."

The day passed away rapidly to the inmates of the noble mansion, where all was bustle, excitement, and eager expectation; and rapidly, too, passed the day at Mr. Heyford's house, where John, Maude, and Edna watched the death sign creeping more and more over the face of the dying child.

All the afternoon she lay in a kind of sleep or stupor, neither moving nor speaking, except occasionally to utter Georgie's name; but about dark there came a change—a great restlessness, with a continual asking for sister and mother.

"Oh! where and who was she? How shall I know her in Heaven if I never saw her here? How did she look? Tell me, John, was my mother beautiful?" she asked.

And he replied:

"Yes, wickedly beautiful."

The last two words were uttered under his breath. Annie heard only the first one, and asked again:

"Beautiful as Georgie, John?"

A suppressed groan was John's only reply as he paced up and down the room, whispering to himself: "Oh! why am I thus punished for her sin? It has been so always. I have suffered, and she has escaped. Is that just or right?"

He was questioning Heaven's dealings with himself when suddenly there flashed into his mind the words, "Vengeance is Mine, I will repay, saith the Lord," and he paused quickly in his walk, with a half-shudder, as he thought how far from him was the wish for vengeance to overtake the woman who had sinned, and for whom he had borne so much—

ay, and for whom he was ready and willing to bear more if need be. He would not harm a hair of that beautiful head, and, with a softer look upon his face, he went to Annie's side, and soothed and quieted her until she fell asleep, resting this time for half an hour or more. Then the restlessness returned, accompanied with moments of delirium, in which she called piteously for Georgie to hold her aching head.

"Her hands are so soft and cool, they rest me so, and I love her so much. Get her, John; tell her to come; tell her Annie is dying, and wants to see her again. She said I should have the nice room when she was married to Mr. Leighton; and I wanted to live so much, and asked Jesus would He let me; but I'm willing now, only I must see Georgie first."

Thus she talked on until the clock was striking seven, and the attending physician came in. He saw at once that she was dying, slowly, but surely, he said, and as he listened to her plaintive pleadings for Georgie he said to John:

"If this Georgie can be reached, my advice is to reach her."

John hesitated a moment, glanced at the little white, wasted form upon the bed, and then thought of the mansion, ablaze with light by that time, and of the brilliant woman who was undoubtedly decking herself in her fairest garb for the occasion, and whose black eyes would flash so angrily, perhaps, should he go for her then.

"I can't, I can't," he thought; but when the little voice, fainter now than when it spoke before, said again: "Has John gone for Georgie?" he went to her and whispered: "Darling, I am going."

"And you won't come back without her? Promise, John."

"No, I won't come back without her; I swear it to you, Annie. I'll bring her, or not come myself."

One kiss he pressed upon the pale face, feeling that it might be the last, and then rushing swiftly down the stairs, and out into the street, he hailed the first cab which passed, and was on his way to bring Georgie.

Georgie was dressed at last; every fold, and flower, and curl, and jewel, was in its place, and she stood before her mirror, flushed with pride and excitement, thinking within herself that few that night could compete with her in beauty, even if the first freshness of youth was gone, and her face did show signs of maturity. Had Miss Overton been there, Georgie felt that she might have had a rival, for there was a wonderful power about the fair young girl to charm and fascinate. But she was away, across the river, doing what Georgie should have done; and when Georgie remembered that she felt a pang of remorse, and wondered how Annie was, saying to herself, with a shudder:

"What if she should die to-night! I never could get over it!"

There was a knock at the door, and the maid, who had left her a few moments before, handed her John's card. The bright colour faded in an instant from Georgie's cheeks as she felt what John's presence there at that time portended, and she leaned against her dressing-table heavily as she said:

"Tell him I will see him here, in my room."

The girl departed with the message, and Georgie had time in which to recover herself a little before John entered the room. She could not go then, whatever might be the import of his errand, she had decided that before he came in; but she walked rapidly towards him, and asked:

"What is it John? Is Annie dead? Tell me quickly—the suspense is horrible!"

"No, not dead, but dying, surely dying, Georgie, and she keeps asking for you. So I came, though sorely against my will, and I have sworn not to return without you. Will you go?"

There was a sharp ring in his voice which slightly exasperated Georgie; but she put the feeling aside, and answered him:

"How can I go? You know it is impossible." Then, as the realities of her position began to impress themselves more and more upon her, she wrung her hands in genuine distress, and cried: "Oh, why am I tortured so? I wish I had died years ago. What made you come here now, when you know I cannot go?"

She turned almost fiercely upon him, as if he had been in fault, but he met her eyes unflinchingly, and replied:

"I told you Annie was dying; that is why I came. I shall not go back without you."

"Then you must wait," she rejoined. "It is almost time now for the guests to come; I must be here to receive them. Perhaps she will revive. Doctors do not always judge aright. She may yet recover, or, at least, live for days."

"I tell you she was dying when I left her, else I should not have come, knowing you as I do," John replied, vehemently.

With a gush of tears Georgie answered:

"I cannot go until the party is over. Come for me then; come at two o'clock, and I will be ready."

He bowed in acquiescence and left the house, meeting, as he went out, the first arrivals, a group of ladies, whose gay dresses brushed against him on the steps, and whose light laughter sounded like mockery in his ears. It was a glorious night; the *élite* of London had turned out *en masse* to honour Mrs. Burton's invitation, until the rooms were full, and the light jest and merry repartees were heard on every side, and the gay dance began to the sound of sweet music.

Amid the scene moved Georgie, queen of all the beauties congregated there, a deep flush on her cheek and a glittering light in her eye which attracted general attention, and was the subject of much comment among the guests. It was an insane, delirious kind of look, and Georgie was nearly mad, as with a heart full of bitter pain she tried to be natural and smile upon those around her as sweetly and pleasantly as if there was no skeleton of death walking at her side, and pointing, with its bony fingers, to where Annie lay dying and begging for her. She could hear the little voice even above the din of the gay throng; and when on one occasion Roy spoke to her twice before she heeded him, and asked what was the matter that she seemed so absent-minded, she felt for a moment as if she must shriek out her miserable secret before them all, and tell them of that little child. She had spoken of her to many of the guests and explained the cause of Maude's absence, but none of those who heard her guessed of the mental agony endured by the beautiful woman who was envied by so many as the bride-elect of Roy Leighton, and the possessor of everything which can make one happy.

The party was over at last; every guest had said good-night, and only one carriage stood before the door. That had waited there an hour, and while it waited the lights flashed out into the darkness, the soft music sounded on the night air, and the merry feet kept time in the dance; the driver nodded on his box, and the tall figure of a man walked up and down, up and down—always to the same lamp-post and back—a worn, anxious look upon his face, and an impatient, resentful expression in his eyes whenever he glanced up at the blazing windows, and then consulted his watch.

John had broken his vow not to return home without his sister. He had tried waiting at the hotel; had sat an hour, and could have sworn it was ten; then with a feeling that he must know how it fared with Annie, had gone to his home.

"Still alive, but falling fast, and asking for Georgie," Maude had said to him, and then he waited another hour and a half until the clock struck twelve.

In two hours more Georgie had said "come," and so he went, and waited before the door until it seemed to him he should go mad. He saw the last carriage as it drove away, and his hand was on the door before the tired servant could lock and bolt it.

"Did you leave anything, sir?" the man asked, thinking John one of the recent guests.

"No; I came for Miss Burton. Say her brother is here," he replied; but before the message could be delivered Georgie was standing by him and had heard the message: "Alive, but dying very fast. You have no time to lose."

And Georgie lost none. Speeding upstairs to her room, she caught up a long waterproof cloak, and wrapping it around her, said to her astonished maid:

"Tell mamma that Annie Heyford is dying; that my brother came for me before the party, and I promised to go as soon as it was over. She must not be troubled about me. I shall come back or send word in the morning."

"But your dress, Miss Burton! Surely, you will change that?" the girl said, thinking her young mistress demented.

Till then Georgie had not given a thought to her dress, and with a shudder as she drew up the folds of her elegant costume, she answered:

"I have no time to change it now. I told you she was dying."

So, with the diamonds glittering on her neck and arms and shining in her hair, Georgie went out to the carriage, where John put her in, his impatience and resentment beginning to subside when he saw the deep pallor of her face, and the look of anguish in her eyes. Her head was uncovered, and the flowers she had worn were there still, but he drew the hood of her cloak over her hair, and adjusted it under her chin with a carefulness and gentleness which brought a gush of tears from Georgie, who laid her head upon his shoulder, and said, sobbingly:

"You are kind, John; I don't deserve that you should think of my comfort."

He did not reply, and the silence between them was not broken until they reached John's home.

There had been some delay in the streets, and it was nearer four than three when Georgie stood at last by Annie's bedside.

She had thrown off her cloak as she entered the house, or rather handed it to Maude, who met her in the hall, and stared in surprise at the gay party dress, which seemed so out of place in that house of death. But for once Georgie never thought of her dress, nor minded in the least when her flowing lace was caught by some projection and had a long rent torn in it. And so, in all the splendour of diamonds, and satin, and flowers, she floated into the sick-room where Annie lay, with her head thrown back, breathing heavily, but with a look of peace upon her face which told that for her all pain had ceased, except as it might return when the final struggle came. She had not asked for Georgie for more than an hour, but the instant the rustle of her sweeping garments and the sound of her step were heard she opened her eyes and exclaimed, joyfully:

"Georgie, sister, come at last!"

"Yes, darling; here at last, never to leave you again," Georgie said, stooping down, she gathered the little wasted form to her bosom and held it there, while she cried over and kissed it passionately, murmuring words of fond endearment such as made Edna, who was in the room, look up in surprise. She had not imagined Georgie to be capable of the deep feeling she was manifesting, and she felt a thrill of friendly liking for the woman who could so love a little child.

"I wanted you so much," Annie said, faintly, as she put her poor thin hand on Georgie's cheeks, which she stroked caressingly. "I am going to die—John told you, perhaps—and shall never be in that pretty room you said you'd choose for me; but I want you to call it Annie's room, and, if I can, I'll come sometimes to see you. You won't hear me nor know it; it will be when the sun is brightest and the flowers are blooming, and you are thinking of Annie; then I'll be there with you."

A cold shudder ran from the crown of Georgie's head to her finger tips as she listened to Annie's plan of revisiting her in the spirit, but she only replied with a closer embrace and a rain of tears, which Annie brushed away as she continued:

"I am not afraid to die, Georgie; and I'm going to Heaven, where you'll come some time, sister, won't you?"

"Oh, Annie, my darling, my darling, I don't know; I am afraid not. Heaven is not for such as I am," Georgie cried, piteously, while Annie continued:

"Why, sister? yes, it is; you are good, and you'll come some day and find me waiting for you, right by the door; but, Georgie"—and Annie's lip began to quiver as there suddenly recurred to her mind the perplexing question which had troubled her so a few hours before, and which John had said Georgie might answer—"but, Georgie, lay me down, please. I'm tired; on the pillow, so—that's nice; and now, tell me, where is my mother—if John's and your mother is not mine?"

The great blue eyes of the child were fixed intently upon Georgie, who started and staggered backward as if smitten with a heavy blow. Edna had stolen from the room, only John was there sitting in a distant corner. To him Georgie turned quickly, and asked, under her breath:

"What does this mean? Who has been disturbing her?"

"It was the merest accident," he said, coming forward at once. "A chance remark I made about her not being mother's own child. Your secret is safe, if that is what you fear."

He said the last in a low tone, with firmly shut teeth, and then walked back to his seat upon the sofa. For a few moments Annie lay quiet, and Georgie hoped she might have forgotten that her question was unanswered, and perhaps for a time she had. A stupor was stealing over her, from which she roused at intervals, and smiled up in Georgie's face with a look of perfect content. She was growing feverish, too, and at times seemed a little delirious, and when she was so, she returned at once to the subject so painful to Georgie.

"How shall I know my mother if I never saw her here, and don't know how she looks nor who she was?" she said, and her eyes held, as by a spell, poor, remorseful Georgie's, who faltered out:

"Your mother is not in Heaven, Annie."

"Not in Heaven?" and the paroxysm of terror was something fearful to witness as Annie writhed upon her pillow. "Where is she then? Not in the bad place? Not there? My mother! Oh, Georgie, oh, Georgie!"

Every word was a moan as the frightened child clutched Georgie's hand and demanded of her whether her mother was lost for ever. She did not seem to remember that she must have had a father, too; it was all "my mother, my mother," until Georgie could bear it no longer, and whispered to her:

"Your mother is not dead. She is living somewhere."

"Then why doesn't she come to see me? Mothers always take care of their sick little girls, don't they?"

John, who could see the anguish written on his sister's face, pitied her as he had never done but once before in his life.

"Oh, Annie, you break my heart; don't ask me about your mother. I cannot, cannot tell. Oh, Father in Heaven, this is worse than death!" Georgie moaned as she knelt upon the floor by Annie's bed and covered her face with her hands.

But amid her pain she did not forget to be cautious; she said to John:

"Please shut the door. I cannot have witnesses to my degradation."

He did as she bade him, and then said to her: "Had you been candid, Georgie, from the first, this would have been spared to you."

Perhaps he was wrong to chide her then when her cup of wretchedness was full. She thought so, at least, and replied to him:

"Don't taunt me now; don't try to make my agony greater than it is. I could not bear another jot. Let me tell you, John, that truly as I live there's nothing I would not do to save Annie's life."

"Nothing?" John said, questioning.

His tone roused Georgie to such an unnatural state that she replied to him:

"No, nothing; and here I swear that if Heaven will spare Annie's life and give her back to me, I'll tell Roy everything. Yes, everything. I mean it. Father in Heaven, hear me—hear the vow I make. Give me Annie's life and I'll tell everything. Try me and see."

She was praying now, while Annie, bewildered by what she had heard, looked first at her and then at John, saying, imploringly:

"Tell what, Georgie? What does it mean? It makes me so dizzy and faint. Is it about my mother, and why she doesn't come when I am dying?"

There was no response to this, and Annie pleaded again:

"Where is she, John? Doesn't she love me at all? Oh, if I could see her once, and hear her voice, and put my head in her lap and call her mother!"

It was a strange spectacle, that pale-faced, dying child, stretching her trembling hands towards that gaily decked, but crushed, stricken woman, and demanding some knowledge of her mother. Georgie shrank back from the touch of the little hands, wiping the sweat-drops from her own pallid face, and turned towards John as if for help in her distress. But John was powerless then; it was her hour of agony, and she must meet it alone.

Suddenly there broke over her countenance a light as of some newly formed resolution, and with a gasp she said to her brother:

"Go out, John, please, and leave us here alone. Keep them all away till I call to you to come. Annie is mine now—mine—all mine!"

She seemed more like a crazed creature, when, after John was gone, she bolted the door, and even looked out into the wintry night, as if fearing flatterers there. But she grew calm again, and her voice, though low and sad, was tolerably steady in its tone as she sat down by Annie and said:

"Ask me anything you please, and I will answer you."

Half-an-hour passed away, and the three waiting below heard only the low murmur of voices—one of surprise and eager inquiry, the other mournful, heartbroken, and, as John knew, full of bitter shame. Then there was a sound of sobbing, with broken sentences of love—Annie apparently trying to soothe her weeping companion, and then another silence, followed by a hasty call for John and Maude to come quickly.

They were in the room in a moment, and each one was struck with the new expression of Annie's face, an expression of wonder, surprise, sorrow, and pity, with love and happiness. Tender now and pitiful as a mother towards her suffering child she seemed towards Georgie, and though she could not speak, her eyes were fastened upon the head bowed down at her side, and her hands kept softly caressing the tangled curls which lay upon the bed-clothes.

"Annie, you are almost home," Maude said, bending over her, and kissing her white brow.

Annie nodded and raised her eyes once to them all, as if in farewell; then her head drooped lower and lower upon her breast, while the hand still smoothed and fondled Georgie's hair. A moment went by which seemed an hour. Then over the dying child there passed a shudder of pain; the hand ceased its caressing motion, and buried itself in the mass of hair; the eyes glanced upward, and the quivering lips said, brokenly:

"I have seen my mother," and then Annie was dead.

Old Luna, who was present, responded:

"Yes, blessed lamb, no doubt her mother did come to meet her. It's apt to be the case. My man see our boy when he died."

This was Luna's solution of Annie's last words, while Maude and Edna had a different one. Standing together by Annie's side, after she was ready for the grave, they looked earnestly at each other for an instant, and then Maude said:

"Do you really believe Annie's mother was with her when she died?"

Edna answered:

"I do." (To be continued.)

LOSS OF H.M. SHIP "CAPTAIN."

Admiralty, September 17, 1870.

THE following gracious message from Her Majesty has been received by Admiral Sir Sydney Dacres:

"The Queen has already expressed to several of the widows and near relatives of the unfortunate sufferers in the late shipwreck Her Majesty's deep sympathy with them in their affliction, but there are many others equally deprived of husbands or relatives whom the Queen is unable to reach except through an official channel.

"Her Majesty, therefore, desires that measures may be taken to signify to the widows and relatives of the whole of the crew, of all ranks, who perished in the 'Captain' the expression of Her Majesty's deep sympathy with them, and to assure them that the Queen feels most acutely the misfortune which has at once deprived Her Majesty of one of her finest ships of war and of so many gallant seamen, and which has inflicted upon their widows and other relatives losses which must for ever be deplored."

Who has not read in the "Essays of Elia" the origin of roast pig? Behold a collateral case! A correspondent paid a visit to a farmhouse near Gravelotte, set on fire during the battle of August 18, and burned to the ground. In the pigsty of the farmyard were six porkers literally roasted alive! "Oh, donner-wetter!" exclaimed a German trooper, looking at the overdone bacon, "What a pity (!), and how good they smell!"

SHEEP'S SKULLS.—A farmer digging a well the other day at Baillieu, in the department of the Eure France, found a number of sheep's skulls, and the work being continued, more than two hundred have been found. This is not an isolated case, similar discoveries having often been made in the neighbourhood, and they are accounted for in various ways; the explanation that is generally given is, that the heads were the result of Druidical sacrifices, the Druids often immolating whole troops of sheep, and always throwing the heads into wells. Perhaps this may be true; but will the skull of a sheep last two thousand years in a damp spot?

THE LIVERPOOL STATUE OF THE QUEEN.—This fine statue is about 14ft. 6in. in height, and nearly 14ft. from the head of the horse to its tail. The statue, which is placed on the north-east side of St. George's Hall, is surrounded by scaffolding, and being an equestrian one, the horse is represented with the left fore-leg slightly raised, and the right hind-leg bent, and resting upon the point of the hoof. Her Majesty is represented as attired in a riding-habit, which reaches almost to the base of the figure, and wearing a round hat adorned with a plume of feathers. Across the breast Her Majesty wears the ribbon of the Order of St. George, and in her right hand she carries a whip, the left being employed in reining up the steed. The statue weighs upwards of four tons, and stands upon a metal plinth, which will be embedded in the pedestal erected in front of St. George's Hall.

A NORMAN DOORWAY.—In removing some ruins in the centre of the town of Colyton the initials "F.B." the device of a fuller's hammer, and the date 1585 were discovered, giving token of the whereabouts of the old domicile of Francis Bagwell, sergeant maker, and some time a foffeee of Colyton, in the reign of Good Queen Bess. In excavating the foundations for a new building, some pieces of sandstone, carved with the characteristic chevron mouldings, revealed portions of a Norman doorway as old as King Stephen, and probably fragments of a former building that previously existed there. The abutting houses are also some of the most venerable remnants of ancient building now left. The well-known hostelry of the "Dolphin," being a portion of the manor property, takes its designation from the badge of the Courtenay family—a dolphin—and probably was known by that name in the time of grim Henry VIII., when he cut off the head of his cousin, the unfortunate Marquis of Exeter, who then possessed the manor. Closely adjoining, also, is the fine picturesque fragment of "Great House," with its chimneys and finials, the residence of Mr. John Yonge, "marchant-adventurer" in the stirring days of Elizabeth.

THE LONDON READER AND LIFE AND FASHION.

CONTENTS.

Page	Page
LADY JULIETTE'S SECRET ... 529	HOUSEHOLD TREA- ... 551
POSTAL CHANGES ... 532	MISCELLANEOUS ... 551
THE DIAMOND COLLAR ... 533	ALBION; THE PRINCE OF ... 552
SCIENCE ... 539	OUR QUEEN. A NA- ... 552
THE PEARLS OF ERIN; ... 537	TIONAL SONG ... 552
OR, THE HALF SISTERS ... 537	
M. JULES FAYE ... 540	No.
FIFTEEN THOUSAND ... 541	LEIGHTON HALL, com- ... 560
POUNDS, DEAD OR ... 541	LADY JULIETTE'S SE- ... 578
ALIVE ... 541	CRET, commenced in ... 578
THE DIAMOND MER- ... 543	FIFTEEN THOUSAND ... 581
CHART ... 543	POUNDS, commenced ... 581
LEIGHTON HALL ... 546	in ... 581
THE LIVERPOOL STATUE ... 547	THE DIAMOND COLLAR, ... 583
OF THE QUEEN ... 547	commenced in ... 583
A NORMAN DOORWAY ... 547	THE DIAMOND MER- ... 586
FASHION PAGE ... 549	CHART, commenced in ... 586
THE WIFE'S SECRET ... 550	THE PEARLS OF ERIN; ... 587
FACTS ... 550	OR, THE HALF SIS- ... 587
FLOWER FAIRIES ... 551	TRES, commenced in ... 587
GENS ... 551	

NOTICES TO CORRESPONDENTS.

W. C.—The lines are unworthy of notice.

HARRIETTE.—The tale has been resumed; its temporary omission was an accident.

M. P. E.—State your ailments to a chemist, and ask him for a little cooling medicine.

SCRIBO.—The writing is good, and characterised by freedom and boldness in contradistinction to neatness.

D. Y. (Portsmouth).—A mixture composed of rose-water, glycerine, and acetate of iron will probably answer your purpose.

E. B. L.—The bedstead of gold was presented to Her Majesty Queen Victoria on the 2nd November, 1859, by the Maharajah of Cashmere.

J. E. M.—Hair cannot be removed without injury to the skin. It is advisable for you to emigrate and to be married also if you have confidence in the gentleman.

A CONSTANT READER.—The signature to your letter and its complaint are irreconcilable. The tale of "Lady Juliette's Secret" commenced in number 378.

P. B. N.—You are not acquainted with any work upon the subject, and recommend you to consult some one practically engaged in the trade.

A. B.—Miss Nightingale and her nurses were at Scutari for about two years, at which place they nursed the sick and wounded soldiers who had been engaged in the Crimean war.

E. S. E.—Your natural abilities for rhyming are great, but your effort lacks care; several of the lines contain too many words. The production does credit to your heart, but in its present state is unsuitable for publication.

BLANCHIE H.—We are sorry that from circumstances over which we have no control your amusement has been interrupted. Ere you read this, however, you will have discovered that the continuation of the story has appeared.

C. R.—She is certainly not too young. Many young ladies of fourteen can play very nicely upon the piano. To realise your wishes, recourse to a music mistress should at once be had, and daily lessons and practice should be industriously persevered with.

PENELOPE.—The inconvenience is in a great measure constitutional and irremediable. Astringent medicines and a cold morning bath will in some measure mitigate the symptoms. Glycerine applied to the hands will tend to remove the roughness of their skin.

A LIVERPOOL APPRENTICE.—You will be at liberty to take a new situation the day after the term of your apprenticeship expires. The contract will then have been completed, and notice to the master with whom you served your apprenticeship is not necessary.

J. S. W. (Oxon).—You can purchase either at Billingsgate market in London, or at Great Yarmouth Market on the eastern coast. As your wants are not restricted to one description merely, you will probably find the former the more convenient.

HENRY W.—The civil population dwelling in the town of Sebastopol during the siege was small; about 16,000. The siege lasted about eleven months. After the fortress was taken the works were utterly destroyed, and the town was restored to the Russians.

A VOLUNTEER.—The war between France and Austria in 1859 lasted about two months. The fighting about the Schleswig-Holstein Duchies in 1864 lasted about nine months. It took the Prussians two months to reduce the fortress of Duppel.

F. O. D.—The words are feeble in the extreme, as contrasted with the idea, so feeble that they occasionally provoke a smile. There is a want of reality about the whole composition. You seem to have mistaken the feeling by which you are possessed, which appears to be not despair but chagrin.

S. V. H.—The war in which the great Duke of Marlborough commanded the British forces in 1702-1713 was what is termed a War of Succession. It arose on the question whether an Austrian prince or a French prince should succeed to the throne of Spain. Though Marlborough fought for the Austrian prince and won the battles, the French prince ultimately took the throne.

CORN FLOWER.—The handwriting is very nice. If Lavator were living, and were called upon to give an opinion upon the features you have portrayed, he would perhaps pronounce that their owner was a person of very warm temperament, bordering upon the passionate, with but little strength of character. It would not be within

his province to say that such a face is handsome, as it undoubtedly is, but he would throw out some hints about capriciousness, and if he were sufficiently interested, counsel discipline, work, and training in patience and truth; lest by-and-by there should be a broken heart!

EMMA.—1. The marriage of the Ex-Emperor of the French with Eugénie, Countess of Teba, took place at the Church of Notre Dame in Paris on the 29th January, 1853. Their son, the Prince Imperial, was born on the 16th March, 1856. 2. The celebrated French actress, Milla, Rachel, died in 1855, at the age of thirty-eight years.

P. S. B.—You cannot obtain the situation of which you are in search without some personal acquaintance with the officials connected with the undertaking. The address of the company can be found in the "London Directory;" but we should not recommend you to think of changing your position unless you can hope for the services of an influential friend. In all probability persons employed in the capacity you have been accustomed to are not required, as such duties would devolve upon the natives.

INA.—Your questions are very difficult to answer. We do not wish to throw any shadow over the joyous hopes that have taken possession of you, but yet it seems to be our duty to remind you of that very old saying, "All is not gold that glitters." There is a great deal too much haste evidenced on the part of your lover; he should wait until your guardian returns to England. At all events, if the marriage must take place in the absence of your guardian, you should insist that your property should be settled upon you in the ordinary way. For this purpose it will be necessary for you to have trustees. Although you have reached the mature age of five-and-twenty, it will be very unwise of you to marry without a settlement.

LOVE.

Love is the poet's fondest, holiest theme,
His inspiration and his thought supreme,
From Solio's bard who sang his fervid strains
To weeping damsels at a wondering swain,
To the last minstrel who in print essayed
A twining sonnet to a village maid.

"Twins love that fired Anacreon's liquid tongue;
'Twas all for love that gentle Sappho sung;
And Horace—happiest of the tuneful race,
With wit and sense to blend poetic grace—
Learned his lore from Lydia's lips and curls
In vineyards vocal with Venusian girls!

So Burns—that mightiest poet of the heart,
Whom Nature blest beyond the reach of Art—
From Love alone a finer culture drew
Than e'er was sought or sought can know;
From "Highland Mary" self the power was given
To sing the song that reached her ear in Heaven!
J. G. S.

SELINA.—In the old times women were sometimes called upon to undertake those duties of war which by nature fall to the lot of the sterner sex. To reward them in some measure for these unusual efforts many orders of female knighthood were created. We append the names of some of these female orders: St. Catherine, Russia, 1714; Star of the Cross, Austria, 1668; Elizabeth Theresa, Austria, 1750; Alamaranta, Sweden, 1645; Death's Head, Germany, 1709; Slaves of Virtue, Germany, 1662; Maria Louise, Spain, 1792; St. Isabella, Spain, 1815.

T. W. B.—The youth of the offender is some excuse, but still the discovery of such a habit in one about whose welfare you are interested should give you some alarm. Any approach to a want of truthfulness in a lad is a very sad thing. By all means, do what you can to eradicate this tendency immediately. A judicious lecture will, perhaps, effect some good, but more is to be done by a kind word now and then in the course of your daily intercourse; a reference to some good living examples within his own knowledge is, perhaps, better than either.

W. G. O.—There is no reason why you should not marry. There is no disparity of age, although certainly the shady side of forty is rather late for each party to enter into a new condition of life. Perhaps the less you say about love the better. Put it in a plain way, thus. You desire companionship; you think that a sincere friendship ought to be cemented; you have for her a great admiration and esteem, and you abhor Platonism. She will not expect that your heart should never have been touched before, but in the belief that you will now be true, she will, in our opinion, accept your hand and fortune.

H.R.—The contents of your letter betray an extreme sensibility of the nervous system, and whether your complaints be real or imaginary, your best course will be to take at once a change of air and change of habit. Apparently your condition has been brought about by the want of occupation and exercise. You should immediately cease to think of yourself, take an interest in some real work, and conscientiously sustain a good amount of bodily exercise. The world is bright enough. There is plenty of love in it, plenty to love you, but you must "a w. o. i. g. o." The idea of a man of your age and position morbidly writing about the state of his nerves would be preposterous were it not known that idleness and luxury often bring about such a catastrophe.

A VOLUNTEER.—Surgeons say that when a bullet strikes the body it seldom produces much immediate pain. It is in the healing process that the inconvenience is felt. In some men the discovery of a wound causes but little alteration in the system, their courage and intellect, and often their pulse, remain unaltered; but in most cases the injury is followed by great depression, when a stimulant should be given. Should the depression continue, and be so paramount as to take away all consciousness of pain, there is ground for apprehension that some important organ has been injured. However, a man in action gives no thought to these matters; he goes at it, as the saying is, until he is physically unable to go on, and then he takes his chance that his wound will be attended to by some friendly aid near at hand.

A. Z.—You paint a very pretty picture truly, but it could not be realised by the proposed methods—at least,

so we think. Peace cannot be obtained by repression, and uniformity without peace is valueless. Indeed, uniformity itself is of questionable value, considered in your meaning of the word. It would be very monotonous to have everything of the same species made of the same pattern, and a mental uniformity would be as disastrous as it is impossible. The human mind is in its nature aspiring, and cannot be permanently controlled—it cannot be fashioned to one universal measure. Sooner or later it will elude the grasp of any system, military or political, ecclesiastical or philosophical, and will seek at any cost to gratify its instinctive desire for freedom. There need neither be vain imaginings nor passionate longings, but there must be liberty. Even the attitude of adoration and reverence is in its essence a free-will offering.

SHANE PAINTER, twenty-six, black hair, black eyes, loving, and a seaman in the Navy. Respondent to be the same age, kind, and loving.

TOM FIFERAIL, twenty-one, 5ft. 5½in., light brown hair, blue eyes, loving, and a seaman in the Navy. Respondent must be loving, and not exceed twenty.

MAR, nineteen, fair, dark brown hair, blue eyes, amiable, and domesticated. Respondent must be dark and good tempered.

J. C., twenty-two, 5ft. 9in., fair complexion, and gray eyes. Respondent must be domesticated, loving, and cheerful.

W. S., good appearance, and address, sound principles, warm-hearted, fond of home, and a Protestant. Respondent must be cheerful, dark complexion, and with small means.

HOMEWARD BOUND, twenty-one, 5ft. 7in., fair, gentlemanly, and in a good position in society. Respondent's age must not exceed nineteen; a dark complexion preferred.

LOVING LIX AND DARK-EYED NELL.—"Loving Lix," medium height, fair, brown hair, and pretty. Respondent must be tall, dark, and in a good position. "Nell," medium height, and dark. Respondent must be tall, fair, and in a good position.

E. B., twenty, tall, blue eyes, brown hair, fond of music and dancing, pretty, and amiable. Respondent must be tall, dark, and handsome.

A. B. C., twenty-three, tall, dark, handsome, and with an income of 350l. per annum. Respondent must be about twenty, tall, good looking, have a small competency, and be of good family.

JOS COMPRESSER, twenty-two, 5ft. 8in., dark hair and complexion, hazel eyes, in the Navy, and with a promising income. Respondent must be fair, fond of company, and loving.

ENDLESS CHAIN, twenty-eight, 5ft. 9in., black curly hair and whiskers, and good looking. Respondent must be fond of travelling, good looking, about twenty-six, good tempered, and loving.

BEAR BUZZER, twenty-seven, 5ft. 4in., dark eyes, hair, whiskers, and moustache, and of foreign appearance. Respondent must be about 5ft. 2in., fond of music, dancing, and company, good tempered, and good looking.

CENTRE ECCENTRIC, twenty-four, 5ft. 11in., brown hair, gray eyes, and moustache. Respondent must be agreeable in society, loving, gentle, and near the same age.

STEADY BOY, thirty, 5ft. 5in., black hair, whiskers, and moustache, and blue eyes. Respondent must be fond of home, nice looking, and good tempered.

COMMUNICATIONS RECEIVED:

FRED has omitted the name of the lady to whom he responds.

R. C. O. D. by—"Harriet," medium height, fair, good looking, and loving.

SHAMROCK by—"S. C.," twenty-seven, blue eyes, good character, and a petty officer in the Navy.

R. S. P. is responded to by—"Mary Kitty," twenty, medium height, a dark pretty girl, with brown hair and hazel eyes.

J. B. by—"Eleanor," thirty-five, affectionate, fond of home and children, domesticated, tall, ladylike, and a widow; and—"M. F.," thirty-eight, good tempered, cheerful, domesticated, and fond of children.

C. C. by—"Constance B.," twenty, fair, and good looking; and—"Rose," eighteen, medium height, slight, black hair and eyes, and entitled to 400l. a year when married.

HARRY-GO-LUCKY by—"F. E.," nineteen, pretty, fond of home, and good tempered;—"J. E. L.," seventeen, tall, dark, blue eyes, merry, affectionate, and capable of making a good wife;—"A. M. W.," nineteen, tall, fair, light hair, dark brown eyes, loving, fond of home and music; and—"Lizzie B.," nineteen, tall, fair, loving, and capable of making a good wife.

SIRKITT by—"Forget-Me-Not," twenty-eight, light complexion, brown hair, light eyes, domesticated, true, and loving;—"Annie U.," twenty-seven, dark eyes and hair, domesticated, dresses well, but is not a girl of the period;—"Julia," thirty-one, petite, dark hazel eyes, dark eyebrows, small mouth, pretty, and would make him a good wife;—"Alice M.," twenty-seven, tall, dark, good looking, and would make an affectionate, true wife; and—"Jeanie," twenty-six, medium height, dark blue eyes, brown hair, affectionate, and domesticated.

Now Ready, Vol. XIV. of THE LONDON READER, Price 4s. 6d.

Also, the TITLE and INDEX to Vol. XIV. Price ONE PENNY.

NOTICE.—Part 89, for OCTOBER, Now Ready, price 7d., containing Steel-Plate Engraving, coloured by hand, of the latest Paris Fashions, with large Supplement Sheet of the Fashions for October.

N.B.—CORRESPONDENTS MUST ADDRESS THEIR LETTERS TO THE EDITOR OF "THE LONDON READER," 334, Strand, W.C.

H. We cannot undertake to return Rejected Manuscripts. As they are sent to us voluntarily, authors should retain copies.

PLAID MANTLE, CROCHET LACE, &c., &c.

THE PLAID MANTLE.—No. 1.

This mantle of plaid poplin is suited for one of those cool days not unfrequent in our variable climate even in the autumn. It may be called circular, though it is cut rather shorter in front than behind. The folds on either side have the effect of sleeves. The scarf-like trimming that hangs loose is cut in an angular shape. The hood, also of plaid, is lined with black silk velvet. The extra adornment consists of edging all round the mantle of narrow black velvet ribbon and plaid fringe.

CROCHET LACE.

For this lace, which is worked in thread, make 16 ch. Then proceed as follows, observing the abbreviations used, viz.: s for stitch; s s, single stitch; ch, chain; c s, chain stitch; sc, scallop; p, picot; l s, long stitch.

1st row.—1 s s in 10 c s, counted from the end, 5 c s, 1 s in the 4 following s, 3 c s.

2nd row.—1 p out of 7 c s, 1 s in the 1st of the same, 5 c s, 1 s in the central s of the c s c of the previous row, 5 c s, 1 s in the 6 following s.

3rd row.—6 c s, 1 s in the middle s of the next ch s c, 5 l s in the next s s, 1 s in the middle s of the next c s c, 3 c s, 1 s in the next s s, 13 l s round the p, 1 s in the 1st chain.

4th row.—Alternately 7 times 3 c s and 1 s s round the 2 following l s of the previous row, 5 c s, 1 s s round the centre of the next 5 l s, 5 c s, 1 s s in the 6 following c s.

5th row.—6 c s, 1 s in each of the 3 c s c of former row between 5 c s and 3 c s.

These repetitions from the 2nd to the 5th row.

IMITATION APPLIQUE IN TATTLING.

ABBREVIATIONS.—P picot, dk double knot.

Begin in the centre of the design, 1 dk five times, 1 p, 2 dk, 1 p, 1 dk, close up the round. Take 2 threads, stop the thread in a p of the little round, * 4 dk, 1 p, 4 dk. Stop the thread in the following p. Turn to the * when you have made the 6 inner scallops. Pass the threads through the p of one of the scallops, then form the 6 exterior scallops with two threads, 3 dk three times, 1 p, 3 dk. Stop the thread in the p of the following scallop, repeat from *.

The stem has two threads, the first of one thread, 2 dk with one thread, 1 round, 3 dk three times, 1 p, 3 dk, close up the round. Carry on the stem with 6 dk having two threads. End the three-leaved group composed of three similar rings, 1 thread, 3 dk five times, 1 p, 3 dk, close up the round.



PLAID MANTLE.—No. 1.

Observe that the rounds are united by arresting 1 thread, replacing the first p of the second and of the third round taken in the last p of the first and second rounds. These patterns may be worked in thread net.

CROCHET LACE WITH BRAID AND PICOT.

Of this lace, the upper edge is of braid and thread, the under worked in crochet with a rather stronger thread than that used for the upper edge.

Each row consists of 15 ch and 2 in one braid, crocheted single at then follow, repeated by three times 3 ch, with 1 single at by way of union with the braid. The exterior worked in crochet with still stronger thread, 5 ch, 1 single st. An additional 5 ch and 1 single at on the ch of the former row. For each loop resembling a long st work 3 ch, wind the thread 8 times round the needle and draw it through with a thread loop. After each long at work 3 ch and 1 single st.

BONNETS.

THE gipsy bonnet with a cape is the choice of the best milliners. With the present fashion of wearing the hair in low braids behind, a bonnet of considerable depth from front to back is required, and this is supplied by the quaint little cape or curtain. This cape is about three inches deep, and extends across the back of the head from ear to ear. It is cut bias, is pleated or gathered very full, and is sewed on below the upper edge, leaving a narrow frilled heading. If the bonnet is of shaded materials, the cape is of the darker stuff, lined or faced with the lighter colour, and the facing is allowed to show at the top and bottom. Strong millinette lining is required if the material is flimsy.

Few puffed or shirred bonnets are seen. The material is laid plainly on the frame, with a double fold around the crown and along the edge as a border. A full, irregular

bow of two or three shades of velvet or royale or faille, a bow with many loops and ends, is placed directly in front, behind the revers. Four overlapping folds are entwined about the crown and are fastened by another bow far back on the left, from which two streamers are left hanging. Two ostrich tips and a flower cluster fill up the vacant space on the right. A lace ruche, flower, or velvet band is placed inside the front revers, for face trimming, or else the front is left plain to be worn over Marie Antoinette puffs of hair. Strings tie under the chin. Shaded bonnets have one light and one dark string. Two pairs of strings are seen on many French bonnets, one pair to tie for use, the other to be loosely tied low down on the breast or else left hanging. Velvet ribbon is much used for strings. There is more trimming on the right side of the bonnet than has been used of late. Streamers hang from the left instead of behind. Ostrich tips curl over the flat crown and back and front from a bunch of flowers.

The new scarabée colour finds favour with our most experienced milliners, who will reproduce it to wear with cashmere costumes of the same colour, and also with black suits.

Among shaded bonnets those of brown are most admired, such as light cuir, tan, or amber brown, with chestnut and dead-leaf brown. The navy blue shade is deeper and fuller this season than last, and is especially pretty with white pipings and snowy ostrich tips. Soft and flowing materials are displayed in bonnets as well as in other parts of a lady's costume. The royale used this season is unusually fine, with small reps, far softer than any uncut velvet.

FROU FROU GAUZE.—Frou frou gauze is a new material introduced for scarf trimming and for veils. It is thin, clear grenadine, of solid colour, with the

OTTOMAN OR CARPET WORK PATTERN.—No. 2.

■ Black. ■ Dark Havannah. ■ Second do. ■ Third do. ■ Fourth do. ■ Dark green. ■ Light green. ■ Dark red. ■ Cherry. ■ Silver Gray. ■ White.

threads shaded to give the effect of the crinkle of crepe, though the surface remains flat. It is entwined like a scarf around royale and velvet bonnets, and hangs in a square handkerchief or streamer on the left side. This streamer may be used as a veil. When the gauze is black it has an applied border of Spanish blonde.

THE WIFE'S SECRET.

"CAN I bear it?" asked George Chesterfield's wife of her own heart as she knelt beside her bed, her arms upon it, her face hidden upon them; "can I bear it? can I bear it?"

Then her own heart answered: "You can; for if he does not love you, you love him." And she arose and stood beside her baby's cradle, and saw its father's eyes looking up at her from it, his tiny miniature, and she took upon her gentle shoulders the burden she had never thought to bear.

That morning a letter had been brought to her—an anonymous letter, accompanied by a packet. The letter ran thus:

"Madam,—A friend, who does not desire to see you imposed upon, sends you these to show you what a man may be. They have been stolen from the person to whom they were written, but the good intention sanctifies the means used to further it."

"A WELL-WISHER."

The wife of two years had read this, and had opened the packet. There she found love-letters, written to some woman who was addressed as Olivia, and dated one year before her own marriage—letters that told the story of a passion warmer than it was pure, for she who had awakened it was evidently a wife—letters such as George Chesterfield had never written to the woman who now read them. Following them came this, dated on the very day before their wedding.

"Dear Olivia—Dearest Olivia,—I shall write no more to you. I shall never say a word of love to you again, for I am about to place myself in a position which makes it my duty to appear to forget you. I am to be married to-morrow. I have done this to tear myself more completely from you. You have often told me that I should. You are right. A man in love cannot trust himself. For my sake—may I say for yours also, Olivia?—I take this step."

"Of course, I do not love this girl; but she is a pure, good woman, and I respect her. They call her beautiful also, but only your face will ever be quite beautiful to my eyes."

"It rises before me as I say adieu. It will haunt me always, but here I part from it. Farewell—farewell, as though I were dying."

"Perhaps in Heaven we may meet again, and there be all in all to each other."

"Yours, for ever, GEORGE CHESTERFIELD."

Helen Chesterfield read this through, knew it to be genuine, and cried out, in her great agony:

"Oh, why did I not die upon that happy wedding-night? Why did I live for this?"

Then for two long hours she knelt beside her pillow, struggling with herself—struggling until, at last, her heart gave her the answer we have already written down:

"Yes, you can bear it; for though he does not love you, you still love him."

Then the poor wife tore into fragments those passionate love-letters, and that final one which seemed her death-wound—the whole cruel packet that had brought her so much woe—and burnt them to ashes on her hearth, and vowed that while she lived her husband should never know that she had read them.

"For he has not deceived me," she said to herself. "He has been true to me—honourable to me. That he has been sorely wounded should not make me hate him, and he shall never know, if I can help it, how I suffer. He is always kind—oh! Heaven pity me—always kind; that must suffice me."

And so she met him, with her babe in her arms, as calmly as she had parted from him.

He never saw the great change in her. He never knew that from that hour life lost its beauty for her—that even the brightness of her love for her babe had faded, because she knew that its father had not loved her. No one knew anything, save that the roundness left her cheek—that her eyes lost half their sweetness—that she never indulged in those moments of reposerful reverie of which she had once been so fond. Work was her refuge, and she dared not pause to think.

People called the Chesterfields a happy couple. Women envied her, for he seemed a model husband. She looked her skeleton carefully up, and gave no one a peep at it.

Years flew by. Two other babies took the first one's place. George Chesterfield grew rich. She had helped him to become so by frugality and unselfishness, and now it was a pleasure to him to

give her the means of doing good among the poor. Helen Chesterfield's carriage was oftener found waiting at the doors of poor persons' houses than at those of her fashionable friends. She was happy in doing good, happy in her children; but still the great craving emptiness was at her heart—the burden of her life song was, "He never loved me." A word of tenderness from a poor labourer to his wife, the words of a love song, or the blush on a girl's cheek would awaken it. She had suffered untold agonies for ten bitter years, had awakened in the night to wet her pillow with her tears because of it, and yet had kept her secret, when one day a woman in the most wretched haunt into which she ever carried her welcome presence, spoke to her of another lying ill in the next room.

"She's been a lady, ma'am," she said. "I think you'd do her good."

And Helen Chesterfield followed her into a room, where, upon a bed, lay the wreck of the loveliest woman on whom Helen's eyes had ever rested; a blonde, with black eyes, whose golden hair swept over her pillow down upon the floor as she lay—a creature with white hands and snowy throat, but with "lost" stamped upon her features as though it had been written there.

She looked at Helen angrily.

"More truths?" she asked, in a harsh, ruined voice. "Take them away, then. It's too late for them with me."

But Helen was not one of those who endeavour to satisfy starving wretchedness with more words. What she said or did hardly mattered, it was always what was most needed. No Pharisaical pride made her shrink from contact with a fallen sister. Food and wine and decent linen were in that poor room before many hours had passed; and she did not even ask the woman's name. It mattered not who she was to Helen. She suffered—this was enough for charity.

So for days and days she ministered to this poor creature, who grew to yearn for her coming, who prayed her to stay longer when she came, but who often looked at her in a strange way, quite unaccountable to Helen; she sometimes began to speak, then paused, and said "Another time," as though she postponed some confidence—the story of her life, perhaps. Only Heaven knew what it might be.

So the autumn wore away. Winter came and went; and in the spring the little life in that poor creature's breast was smouldering out. Helen knew that she must die. It seemed right to tell her so; but the task was a woful one.

She sat beside her, thinking of this, one day, when the poor soul caught her hand.

"I shall go soon, shan't I?" she asked. "I know it is so. But promise me that when I have told you my story you won't leave me—that you will still be kind to me, and not turn from me. Promise."

"I promise," said Helen.

"You are George Chesterfield's wife? I know it. You need not answer. You remember, ten years ago, receiving some letters written to Olivia?"

Remember! The wife's cheek paled. She remembered it all ways.

"Go on," she said, hoarsely, bitterly; her whole woe was upon her as it had never been before. "Go on."

"I am Olivia," said the woman. "I sent those letters myself. I did it to make you wretched, to revenge myself upon him. He was young when he met me. I, a married woman, though no older than he—I lured him on; I delighted in his hopeless love—in those letters—in his protestations. I joyed in the receipt of that one written on his wedding eve. Good women cannot understand how wicked women rejoice in mauling hearts they do not care for—in ruining young men's lives for a petty triumph. Lady, don't turn from me. I've not done yet."

"Had you not done enough?" gasped the wretched wife. "Could you not have kept this from me? You ruined my young life. You killed me; yes, you killed me, as far as heart went."

"Ah!" cried the woman. "It was not when he wrote love to me that I betrayed him. Revenge prompted me. Six months after his marriage I received this. Read it. When that came I sent you the others. I was a fiend—I know it; but perhaps I can undo my work even now. Read this and see."

Helen seized the faded, dingy envelope that the woman drew from her bosom, and hurried with it to the light. She tore it open, and looked upon the lines within. This was what she read, dated six months after her marriage:

"Olivia—My Friend,—I told you I would never write again to you, and I wrote like a fool. I told you that I married a woman I did not love, and that I should love you for ever. Being so true a friend as I believe you are to me, you will rejoice to know that I was quite mistaken. I have forgotten the unhappy passion of my youth, as you so often bade me, and man never loved a wife so fondly as I love my

darling Helen. She is the life of my life, the soul of my soul, and I cannot leave you under the false impression I have given you. Love came after marriage, it is true, to me; but its germ was in my heart. You will be glad to know of this, and wish me, as I wish you, every happiness."

"GEORGE CHESTERFIELD."

She read it through—she read it twice, this poor wife, to whom balm had come after so many years—and sank down upon her knees, forgetful of all else, and thanked Heaven for it. When she turned once more towards the bed, she saw that in that moment the death angel had come, and that the unhappy Olivia had passed into eternity.

When George Chesterfield met his wife that night he hardly knew her. Her girlhood seemed to have returned; her smile charmed him as of yore; her eyes were bright, her lips red again.

"How happy you look!" he said.

And she answered:

"I am very happy."

Nothing more was said then, but one day she told him all. M. K. D.

SIR SAMUEL BAKER ON THE WHITE NILE.

In April Sir Samuel had effected a junction with Mr. Higginbottom, who had safely transferred all the heavy material across the desert to Khartoum, and then gone forward to meet his chief, who was on his return from an exploring expedition of 300 miles up the Bahr Giraffe. The White Nile had assumed a very different appearance since it was last visited by Sir Samuel. It was then remarkable for its great depth and width, but now, owing to an enormous accumulation of vegetable matter brought down in the shape of floating islands, it is entirely closed to navigation. These have formed a new district between the rivers Gazelle and Giraffe, but the old dam mentioned on the "Albert Nyanza" has been left to chance, and utterly neglected by the authorities at Khartoum, from whence arises the great obstruction that now exists. The slave traders discovered a channel by the Bahr Giraffe which communicated with the White Nile above the dam referred to, and, consequently, Sir Samuel determined to adopt that route, having first explored it to the extent of 300 miles from its junction with the Nile. This was a most arduous undertaking, conducted with five guides, a flotilla of thirty-three vessels, and two steamers. Suddenly the river was lost; no further progress could be made, not one drop of water was visible from the masthead of the largest vessel; nothing but a boundless mass of bog, covered with high grass; beneath it the water was deep, showing that the flat plateau was evidently the old bed of a lake that had become choked with an accumulation of decomposed vegetable matter. It may be concluded that, in course of time, this will become dry land, and thus exemplify the principle which has formed the enormous tract of rich fertile loam that borders the Nile in Central Africa.

After thirty-two days of continuous work with 1,000 men, a passage was cut through the morass about eight miles in length, and of sufficient width to permit the boats to pass. The paddles were then dismounted from the steamers, and they were warped through with exceeding difficulty and the loss of some lives. At length the true channel of the river was reached in N. lat. 7°30' deg., but the depth was only three feet. A careful examination in a rowing boat for some miles in advance gave no better result; the river was useless, the water entirely failed, and the Bahr Giraffe could only be passed during the high Nile. The heavy rains had now commenced, and Sir Samuel, fearing the loss of his supplies, hurried back with his party to the White Nile, in order to stop the further advance of the contingent coming from Khartoum, and to form a convenient station for the wet season. The position selected was an important one, abounding in wood, standing at a good elevation above high-water mark, commanding the White Nile, and facing the Shilluk country on the west. The force has been there since the 25th of April, consisting in number of about 1,500 men, the camp arranged as a permanent station, and a large supply of corn sown in the rich soil that lies all around.

Sir Samuel Baker has succeeded in entering into friendly relations with the "Shilluks," and, through some of the leading natives, has discovered a new channel that has been lately forced through by the river, and which, spite of the dam, will yield a passage to the south when the start is made in November. The Shilluk country is wonderfully fertile, affording most favourable conditions for the cultivation of cotton, which might be grown to any amount. The population is estimated at about one million. About six years ago the Egyptian Government established a station in latitude 9°34' degrees, called Fastroda, but it was nothing but a penal settlement. The various Governors neglected everything in the way of improvement, subsisting

solely on an organised system of slander, and the official who ruled when Sir Samuel arrived proved his Conservative principles by being caught in a rascia with 155 slaves in his possession, women, girls, and boys, seventy-one of whom were packed in one small vessel. Sir Samuel at once made the Governor disgorge his booty, and reported him to the Viceroy. This transaction, together with a further capture of another cargo of 150 slaves on board a trader, and the sending of the agent in irons to Khartoum, has caused the most profound commotion in the Soudan, as proving most unmistakably that the extermination of the slave trade on the White Nile is intended, and will be carried out as promptly and completely as possible. Sir Samuel, who, with Lady Baker and the English party, enjoys admirable health, has constructed galvanised iron magazines 200 feet long by 20 broad, in which are stored all sorts of munitions, well protected from rain.

FACETIÆ.

SELF-EVIDENT.

Good news always comes to those who know how to wait for it. "The War Office is about to take steps towards securing the military efficiency of our reserve forces. Mr. Cardwell has, within the last few days, issued no less than four circulars with this object." These, if not quite all that is necessary, are still, to a certain extent, gratifying. When there are so many circulars about, things must be coming round.—*Judy.*

SUTTERINGS FROM JUDY'S PEN.

Query.—Will the Prussians wake up, now that they have taken their Nap?

Why do the German people represent iron and quinine?—Because they are Teutonic.

An Irishman's height of civility.—The top of the mornin'.—*Judy.*

"WAR, HORRID WAR!"

Purchaser: "Ah, you cats'-meat men don't give half such a good ha'porth as you used to some years ago."

Surveyor: "Well, yer see, mum, the ha'penny ain't so big as it was then, which in course makes a wonderful difference. Then, yer know, the French have took to eatin' 'osses; and then, again, the 'osses is being 'bought up for cavalry charges."—*Will-o'-the-Wisp.*

AN OLD ONE.—A funny story is going the rounds in Paris. A lady in the first society was recently obliged to dismiss her nurse, on account of an excess of firemen and private soldiers too often repeated. After choosing as a successor to this criminal a very pretty girl, the lady, explaining why the first was sent away, enjoined on the second not to do likewise. She admitted that she shouldn't. "I can endure a great deal," said the lady, "but soldiers about the kitchen I won't endure." After a week or eight days, the lady came one morning into the kitchen, opened a cupboard, and discovered a youthful military character. "Oh, ma'am!" cried the girl, frightened, "I give you my word I never saw that soldier before in all my life—he must have been one of the old ones left over by the other girl!"

MODEL IRELAND.—The conversation which it is reported was overheard the other day in Paris between one workman and another, proves that the example of the Emerald Isle is not lost upon their fraternising brotherhood: "Do you mean to shoot the Prussians if they come to Paris?" said Jeannot Blois to his companion, Pierre Lavoche, a Red Republican. "Well," replied he of the sanguinary hue, "I do not know about that just at present. The fact is, I have no peculiar hatred against the Prussians, but I would not kill one of them except on one condition, I must be allowed to fire my first cartridge at my own landlord." This startling and truly Hibernian stipulation did not seem to create any very great surprise. The former workman admitted that there was something in what his comrade has said—indeed, a great deal of wisdom; but still the nation was before everything. The Red, however, would not yield his point. No Prussian would he shoot till he had shot his landlord. For twenty years his landlord had constantly been raising his rent.—*Will-o'-the-Wisp.*

TALENTED YOUTH.—A good anecdote is told of a house-painter's son, who used the brush dexterously, but unfortunately had acquired the habit of "putting it on a little too thick." The other day his father, after having frequently scolded him for his lavish daubing, and all to no purpose, gave him a severe flagellation. "There, you young rascal," said he, after performing the painful duty, "how do you like that?" "Well, I don't know, dad," whined the boy in reply, "but it seems to me you put it on thicker than I did."

ONLY A NINEPIN.—The Earl of Lonsdale was so extensive a proprietor and patron of boroughs, that he returned nine members to Parliament, who were facetiously called Lord Lonsdale's ninepins. One

of the members thus designated, having made a very extravagant speech in the House of Commons, was answered by Mr. Burke in a vein of the happiest sarcasm, which elicited from the House loud and continued cheers. Mr. Fox, entering the House just as Mr. Burke was sitting down, inquired of Sheridan what the House was cheering. "Oh, nothing of consequence," replied Sheridan, "only Burke has knocked down one of Lord Lonsdale's ninepins."

NOT THE SAME.

"Mr. Jones, I understand you said I sold you a barrel of cider that had water in it."

"No, no," was the reply, "I only said that you sold me a barrel of water with a little cider in it."

FLOWER FAIRIES.

In the beautiful days of long ago,
Ere my locks were silvered with the snow,
That bounteous Time, with a lavish hand,
Gives to the aged in his hand,
I used to wait in the woods for hours,
To see the fairies that haunt the flowers.

Perchance I dreamed, but the fairies came—
Some were fairies I knew by name.

The rest were clad in the mystic green,
A blaze of light, and the goblin green;
Some borrowed form of the busy ants,
And made their homes 'neath the fragrant plants.

My favourite sprite in the noon-time hour,
Airily humming from flower to flower,

A tiny creature all gay and bright,
A mass of colours, a ray of light,
Resting a moment in blissful repose
And drinking the heart sweets of lily and rose.

Ah, humming-bird, with your plumage gay,
Your every motion seemed to say,

"Gather life's sweetness while you can,
Heed a bird's teaching, child of man;
Drink deep of pleasure, grasp all earth's bliss,
God made the beautiful world for this!"

The bees are fairies who think of age,
They chided the bird with their maxims sage:

"Child, gather the honey pure, refined,
Let no poison enter the storehouse, your mind."

"The nectar of knowledge," the queen bee said,
"Will keep long after your youth is dead."

Then the kind bees showed me the bird's home nest,
With the birdlings that nestled beneath her breast;

And told me how, with her slender bill,
She reared her house with an artist's skill,
And how she watched with a mother's care
The tiny darlings that dwelt in there.

Another lesson the fairies taught—
A lesson with meaning deeply fraught—

It came to me with a potent spell
Found in fairy spider cell.

These words made plain in tracery true:
"Patience a perfect work will do."

Ah, the golden years, how they come and go!
Bringing their gladness and their woe.

Each passing hour to memory brings,
E'en amid deeper, sterner things,
The lessons learnt in the rustic bowers,
Taught by the fairies of the flowers.

M. E. T.

GEMS.

If you are a wise man, you will treat the world as the moon treats it. Show it only one side of yourself, seldom show yourself too much at a time, and let what you show be calm, cool, and polished. But look at every side of the world.

There is nothing purer than honesty; nothing sweeter than charity; nothing warmer than love; nothing richer than wisdom; nothing brighter than virtue; nothing more steadfast than faith.

It is said that many a man has missed being a great man by splitting into two middling ones. Concentrate your energies, if you would make a figure in the world.

In mixed company, be readier to hear than to speak, and put people upon talking of what is in their own way; for then you will both oblige them, and be most likely to improve by their conversation.

Follow the laws of Nature, and you never will be poor. Your wants will be but few. Follow the laws of the world, and you will never be rich. You will want more than you can acquire.

HER Majesty the Queen has, through Major-General Sir Thomas M. Biddulph, K.C.B., just presented a donation of 2*l.* to William and Elizabeth

Cuttriss, of New Barnes Road, in the city of Ely, who will have completed the 70th year of their married life in the June of next year. The man is ninety years of age, and the woman is his junior by only two years.

HOUSEHOLD TREASURES.

TO CLEAN SABLE AND OTHER FURS.—Sprinkle every part thoroughly with hot flour and sand, and well brush with a hard brush. Then beat with a cane, comb it smooth with a wet comb, and press carefully with a warm iron. For ermine use plaster of Paris instead of flour and sand, and treat in the same way.

IMPRESSION OF FERN LEAF.—Place the leaf in contact with "sensitive" paper, in a photographic pressure frame, and expose to light till the uncovered part of the paper becomes very dark; a beautiful print will thus be obtained, but it will require "toning and fixing" to render it permanent. The above method gives a light impression on a dark ground, but it may be reversed by using the print as a negative; thus any number of impressions may be obtained from the leaf.

TOMATO SAUCE.—Select them ripe and red, cut off the stalks, divide in halves and squeeze out the seeds, put in pan with a capsicum and a little gravy; add white pepper and salt, strain through cloth or sieve, and warm up. Or, to the above add sweet herbs, two onions stuck with cloves, strains, and add when warming a piece of butter rolled in flour. An addition is sometimes made of some lean ham minced fine, when the tomatoes are put in the stewpan, also of tarragon vinegar at the finish. To preserve tomatoes, bake in earthen jar until tender, pass through a sieve, add to each four pounds one ounce of white pepper, one ounce of mace, a quarter pound finely minced shallots, one ounce of garlic, half a pound of good glaze, boil together, add the juice of six lemons, and strain. The whole should now be of the consistency of good cream; put into small well-corked bottles, and keep in dry place.

MISCELLANEOUS.

THE Duke of Edinburgh, after visiting the Fiji Islands, will sail for England in January, 1871, calling at the Falkland Islands and Monte Video.

THE GATLING GUN.—In the latest experiments with the Gatling battery gun at Shooburyness, the small Gatling gun of forty-two one-hundredths of an inch calibre was tried. This gun has ten steel rifled barrels, and is made of any proper calibre to suit the musket cartridges used by different governments. It was fired at the high rate of about 350 shots a minute. The one-inch gun was also tested. This is the largest gun, and is made with six, sometimes with ten barrels, and discharges solid lead balls half-a-pound in weight. It discharged 255 half-pound balls in one minute and eighteen seconds, and riddled the target at 1,400 yards. The small gun was again discharged at 1,400 yards, and fired about 375 shots a minute. There were 136 dummies, 59 of which would have been killed. The average hits were four in each man. All on the ground seemed to agree that they had seen the operation of a weapon of unprecedented power.

A SWEDISH PRINCESS'S DOWRY.—The city (Stockholm) was in a great state of excitement, in consequence of the approaching marriage of the King's only child to the Crown Prince of Denmark. There had been some little hitch about the dowry. The King expected his Parliament to give a handsome one; but they were of opinion that as he had four millions of dollars a year (over 200,000*l.* of our money) he ought to be able to give the dowry himself. It does seem a large sum for so small and poor a state, especially as the country has been much impoverished by stagnation of trade and a succession of bad harvests. The dispute ended in the States giving a lump sum of 4,444*l.* The trousseau of the happy bride was exposed to public view four days before the wedding, and we were much amused by seeing from morning till night a long procession of eager females of all ages, some six deep, patiently waiting until the head of their band, having fastened their eyes, made way for them. Here and there a bashful male had joined the line, and was jeered at by those who had no part in the affair. An order had been given, and placards were put up everywhere, that no one was allowed to touch the royal garments, and any one doing so would be instantly dismissed. The story goes that a lady was observed feeling the texture of one of the dresses; instantly there was a shout from one of the bystanders, and on their clamouring for the immediate removal of the offender it was discovered to be none other than the princess herself.—*Try Lapland. By Alex. H. Hutchinson.*

Albion, the Pride of our Queen.

[NOVEMBER 1, 1870.]

A NATIONAL SONG.

By the Author of
"THE QUEEN AND THE NAVY FOR EVER."

VOICE. *Maestoso con spirito.*

1 The nations may boast of their skies ever clear, While our ships nobly float o'er the
2 The factions who carp and with prejudice blind, A - way dis-con-tent-ed may

PIANO. *tromba* *p*

espres.

sea, And our flag braves the breeze, or wher - ev - er we steer, - Old Eng - land's the home of the free. Our
roam; Turn wher - ev - er they may, by con - trast they'll find, - Old Eng - land is li - ber - ty's home. While

f *p*

dolce.

Tars know no dan - ger, our Wo - men are fair, Where else can such beau - ty be seen? Or, where in the world is a
li - ber - ty, va - lour, and beau - ty we share, And the flag of our com - merce is seen, Oh! where in the world is a

f *p*

dolce.

spot to compare, With Al - bion the pride of our Queen? With Al - bion the pride of our Queen, With Al - bion the pride of our

f *p* *ff* *cres.*

ad lib. *dolce.*

Queen, Oh! where in the world is a spot to compare With Al - bion the pride of our Queen?

f *pp* *colla parte.* *f* *f tromba.*

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